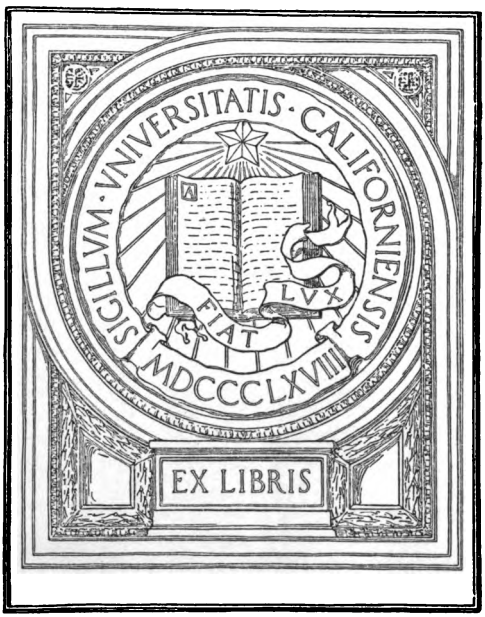
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

https://books.google.com

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PASTORAL THEOLOGY

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PASTORAL THEOLOGY

By the

RIGHT REV. WM. STANG, D.D.

Revised according to the New Code of Canon Law

NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO

BENZIGER BROTHERS

PRINTERS TO THE HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE

Digitized by Google

Nihil Obstat.

THOS. L. KINKEAD,
Censor Librorum.

Imprimatur.

✠ MICHAEL AUGUSTINE,
Archbishop of New York.

NEW YORK, February 19, 1897.

Nihil Obstat.

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.,
Censor Librorum.

Imprimatur.

PATRICK J. HAYES, D.D.,
Archbishop of New York.

NEW YORK, November 21, 1921.

COPYRIGHT, 1897, 1921, BY BENZIGER BROTHERS

Printed in the United States of America.

Digitized by Google

BX
1912
S78p

PSYCHOLOGY

Scribner

BONI PASTORIS MATRI
VIRGINI AB ORIGINE LABIS NESCIAE
FOEDERATARUM AMERICAE PROVINCIARUM PATRONAE
BENIGNAE COLLEGII AMERICANI LOVANII FAUTRICI
GULIELMUS STANG
SUORUM FRUCTUS LABORUM
DEDICABAT.

291513

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

PAGE

PREFACE, ... 7
INTRODUCTION, ... 13

FIRST BOOK.

PART I. PREACHING.

§ 1. Dignity and Obligation of Preaching, . . . 15
§ 2. Qualifications of the Preacher, ... 18
§ 3. Preparation, ... 27
§ 4. What to Preach, ... 31
§ 5. What Not to Preach, ... 35
§ 6. Necessary Qualities of a Good Sermon, . . . 42
Plain, ... 42
Pleasant, ... 46
Persuasive, ... 48
§ 7. How to Preach, ... 51
§ 8. Where to Preach, ... 56

PART II. CATECHISING.

§ 9. Importance of the Catechetical Office, . . . 59
§ 10. The Catechist, ... 62
§ 11. Manner of Teaching Catechism, ... 65
§ 12. Catechism in School and in Church, ... 69
§ 13. First-Communion Class, ... 73

Digitized by Google

SECOND BOOK.

PART I. THE SACRAMENTS.

PAGE

§ 14. The Sacraments in General, ... 81

CHAPTER I. THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM, ... 87

§ 15. Necessity of Baptism. Matter, Form, Minister, . 87
§ 16. Baptism of Infants, ... 92
§ 17. Baptismal Requisites, ... 96
§ 18. Converts, ... 101

CHAPTER II. THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION, . . . 108

§ 19. Its Nature and Necessity. Preparation, . . . 108

CHAPTER III. THE SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST, . 111

§ 20. The Emmanuel, ... 111
§ 21. On His Throne, ... 122
§ 22. Holy Communion, ... 126
§ 23. The Viaticum, ... 137
§ 24. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, ... 139

CHAPTER IV. THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE, ... 159

§ 25. The Ministry of Reconciliation, ... 159
§ 26. The Kindness of a Father, ... 164
§ 27. The Knowledge of a Judge, ... 168
§ 28. The Prudence of a Physician, ... 171
§ 29. Confessions of Men, ... 177
§ 30. Confessions of Women, ... 178
§ 31. Confessions of Children, ... 180
§ 32. Confessions of Pious Persons, ... 185
§ 33. General Confession, ... 187
§ 34. Remedies, ... 190
§ 35. Admonitions, ... 192
§ 36. Indulgences, ... 195

CHAPTER V. THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION, . . 198

§ 37. Sick Calls, ... 198
§ 38. The Anointing of the Sick, ... 207
§ 39. Christian Burial, ... 210

Digitized by Google

PAGE

CHAPTER VI. THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS, . . . 215

§ 40. Candidates, ... 215

CHAPTER VII. THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY, . . . 218

§ 41. 218

PART II. SACRAMENTALS.

§ 42. Nature and Use of Sacramentals, ... 227
§ 43. Exorcisms, ... 228
§ 44. Blessings, ... 231

THIRD BOOK.

PASTORAL DIRECTION.

§ 45. The Divine Fire, ... 238
§ 46. A Pattern of the Flock, ... 244
§ 47. The Rectory, ... 250
§ 48. The Friend of the Poor, ... 255
§ 49. Missions, ... 261
§ 50. Nuns, ... 268
§ 51. Catholic Schools, ... 275
§ 52. Church Music, ... 282
§ 53. Building, ... 287
§ 54. Societies, ... 294
§ 55. Book-Keeping, ... 310
§ 56. The Priest's Library, ... 325

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INTRODUCTION.

1. **Pastoral Theology** is the science which teaches the proper discharging of the various duties of the priest in the care of souls. It is the scientific application of the different branches of theology whose study it presupposes. As a science it has its rules, directions, and customs which serve as its principles. Its end is the preparation of the young ecclesiastic for his sublime destiny to worthily represent Christ among the people and to continue the work of His redemption: *Dominus Noster Jesus Christus, e terris ascensurus ad coelos, sacerdotes sui ipsius vicarios reliquit.* (Conc. Trid. sess. xiv., cap. v.)

2. From the earliest days of the Church Pastoral Theology has been recognized as a most important and useful science and art. St. Gregory Nazianzen (*Or. de Fuga*) says: *Ars quaedam artium et scientia scientiarum mihi esse videtur hominem regere.* And Gregory the Great's words are sufficiently known: *Ars artium regimen animarum.* St. Paul gave the first lessons in Pastoral Theology to his disciples, Timothy and Titus, in his epistles addressed to them.

3. **Sources.**—Sacred Scriptures, especially the epistles of the apostles.—Fathers of the Church: St. Ignatius, St. Cyprian, St. Gregory Nazianzen (*Oratio de Fuga*), St. Chrysostom (*De Sacerdotio*), St. Ambrose (*De Officiis*), St. Jerome (*Epp. ad Nepotianum, Rusticum, Heliodorum*), St. Augustine (*De Doctrina Christiana, de Catechizandis Rudibus*), St. Gregory the Great (*Regula Pastoralis*).—Papal documents.—Ecumenical, national, and provincial councils.—Decisions of the Sacred Congregations.—Liturgical books.—Diocesan and episcopal enactments.—

Digitized by Google

Legitimate customs.—Experiences of saintly and learned pastors.—Personal experience with a constant study of human nature, whose main features are always and everywhere the same.—The handiest and perhaps the most useful book of Pastoral Theology is one's own heart. Massillon when asked: "Where did you get that marvellous knowledge of the human heart which reveals itself in all your sermons?" answered: "Simply by looking into my own heart."

4. **Literature.**—The best and most complete treatises on Pastoral Theology are written in German. We mention only the prominent works of Sailer, Amberger, Benger, Pohl, Schuech, Stolz, Gassner, Renninger-Goepfert.—Latin works: Lohner (*Institutiones Practicae*), Neumayr (*Vir Apostolicus*), Mach (*Thesaurus Sacerdotalis*), Radlinsky (*Theologia Pastoralis*). French authors: Dieulin and Dubois.—Our friend, Father Schulze, has followed us closely with a serviceable Pastoral Theology; we also have excellent books by Cardinal Gibbons (*The Ambassador of Christ*) and Cardinal Manning (*The Eternal Priesthood*) and Bishop Moriarty (*Allocutions*), and good translations of Frassinetti (*Parish Priest's Manual*) and of Schuech (*First Part of Pastoral Theology*). The *American Ecclesiastical Review* is a monthly publication exclusively devoted to the diffusion and interpretation of practical theology, more especially in its bearing upon the Church administration in the United States. This magazine is of the highest value for the field of Pastoral Theology in America and seems almost indispensable to the American clergy.

5. **Division.**—The natural division of Pastoral Theology appears to be given in the divine command: *Euntes docete* (preaching and catechizing); *baptizantes* (dispensing the means of grace, sacraments and sacramentals); *docentes eos servare omnia, quaecumque mandavi vobis* (leading and directing the flock of Christ).

Digitized by Google

PASTORAL THEOLOGY.

FIRST BOOK.

PART I.

PREACHING.

§ 1.

Dignity and Obligation of Preaching.

Pro Christo ergo legatione fungimur, tamquam Deo exhortante per nos. Obsecramus pro Christo, reconciliamini Deo (2 Cor. v. 20).

1. Preaching is to speak in the name of Christ as His ambassador; it is to offer salvation to men by announcing the Gospel of truth and peace to those who are "of good will." It is a sublime function: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, of them that bring the glad tidings of good things" (Rom. x. 15).

2. The natural order calls for the duty of preaching. The priest is a father; the spiritual child has a right to be guided and instructed by its parent. Moreover, faith is the root and beginning of spiritual life; but faith comes from hearing. *Quomodo autem audient sine praedicante?* (Rom. x. 14.)

Digitized by Google

3. Positive divine law makes preaching a necessary duty. *Euntes docete; praedicate evangelium omni creaturae* (Mark xvi. 15). Christ sent His apostles to preach: *Misit illos praedicare regnum Dei* (Luke ix. 2). They need not fear any human power: *Verbum Dei non est alligatum* (2 Tim. ii. 9). They are to speak freely and boldly: *Praedicate super tecta* (Matt. x. 27). The apostles taught the necessity of preaching, and looked upon it as a duty pressing on them. Mindful of the Master's precept, St. Peter says: *Praecepit nobis praedicare populo* (Acts x. 42). St. Paul writes: *Hoc est verbum fidei, quod praedicamus* (Rom. x. 8). He teaches Titus (ii. 1) the importance of this duty: *Tu autem loquere quae decent sanam doctrinam.* He urges Timothy (2, iv. 2): *Praedica verbum, insta opportune, importune: argue, obsecra.* The Apostle of the Gentiles takes no credit for preaching constantly: *Nam si evangelizavero, non est mihi gloria, necessitas enim mihi incumbit: vae enim mihi est si non evangelizavero* (1 Cor. ix. 16). The apostles regarded preaching their primary duty: *Non est aequum nos derelinquere verbum Dei* (Act vi. 2). St. Chrysostom adds in explanation: *Et quidem nulla alia de causa tunc omnes Stephano viduarum oeconomiam commiserunt, quam ut ipsi verbi ministerio vacarent* (De Sacerd. l. n. 3). At all times the ministers of Christ must be ready to preach: *Parati semper ad satisfactionem omni poscenti vos de ea, quae in vobis est spe* (1 Pet. iii. 15).

4. The Council of Trent clearly defines the duty of preaching for all who have the care of souls: *Praecepto mandatum est omnibus, quibus animarum cura commissa est, oves suas verbi divini praedicatione pascere* (Sess. xxiii., c. i.). The same Council specifies the time of preaching: *Quicumque parochiales vel alias curam animarum habentes, ecclesias quocumque modo obtinent, per se, vel per alios idoneos, si legitime impediti fuerint, diebus saltem*

Digitized by Google

aominicis et festis solemnibus plebes sibi commissas pro sua et earum capacitate pascant salutaribus verbis (Sess. v., c. ii.). The third Baltimore Council enjoins the Tridentine decrees with their binding force *etiam tempore aestivo*, and threatens their non-observance with a severe penalty from the Ordinary (No. 216).

5. A true priest will not so far forget his sublime dignity as to imitate Protestant ministers, who give themselves and their people a vacation, each year, of six or eight weeks by "closing up shop" and seeking a cool shade in the country or the salubrious breezes of the ocean. There is no vacation in the service of God: as daily nourishment is necessary for the life and health of the body, so the soul must continually receive its spiritual food. Thus St. Chrysostom considers the preaching of the *verbum Dei* the necessary means by which the soul of the Christian is kept from disease and death. *Hoc vice medicamenti, hoc vice ignis ac vice ferri, sive urendum sive secandum sit, illo uti necesse est: si illud nihil possit, reliqua omnia incassum abeunt. Hoc et jacentem animam excitamus, et tumentem compescimus, et redundantia praescindimus et deficientia supplemus, et reliqua omnia facimus quae ad animae conferunt incolumitatem. Nam ad vitae optimam constitutionem alterius vita ad similitudinem et aemulationem revocare possit. Cum autem anima circa spuria dogmata aegrotat tunc verbi usus maxime necessarius est, non ad domesticorum securitatem tantum, verum etiam ad externa bella* (*De Sac.* n. 3). "So essential," Cardinal Gibbons says, "to the preservatio[illegible]hristianity is the ministry of preaching. [illegible]t if th[illegible] the evangelist were hushed in a district [illegible]ty f[illegible]rs the light of the Gospel would be [illegible]igh[illegible]d in that region" (*The Ambassador* [illegible]*ist*, [illegible]

A [illegible]*m animarum habens*, is bound in [illegible]nce [illegible] the office of preaching *pro capaci-*

Digitized by Google

tate sua. With himself, it is a question of saving his own soul. If he be incapable of preaching, it matters not for what reason, he should ask his bishop for a capable assistant or resign his pastoral charge. St. Alphonsus (*Praxis Conf.*, n. 203) states that some theologians believe a parish priest who neglects to preach during one continuous month sins grievously; and Barbosa, who has never been accused of rigorism, maintains: *Qui raro concionantur, peccant mortaliter, etiam praecisa gravi necessitate populi* (*De officio parochi*, i. 14).

§ 2.

Qualifications of the Preacher.

1. **A vocation,** a special calling from God, is the first and fundamental requirement of the preacher, because preaching is a priestly function. St. Gregory says: *Praeconis officium suscipit quisquis ad sacerdotium accedit.* But a vocation is absolutely necessary for the sacerdotal dignity. *Nec quisquam sumit sibi honorem, sed qui vocatur a Deo* (Heb. v. 4).

2. **A mission** gives the preacher the credentials of his office.* He must be sent by the Church of God so that he may speak with authority: *Sicut potestatem habens, et non sicut scribae et Pharisaei* (Matt. vii. 29). Being sent, he comes *in nomine Domini* as the *alter Christus*, His ambassador to guilty men, speaking in His name and place. Whether young or old, he is authorized to say with St. Paul: *Tamquam Deo exhortante per nos* (2 Cor. v. 20).

3. **A virtuous life** is another requisite of the *sacerdos sacra docens.* Like St. John the Baptist, he must appear before his hearers *in sanctitate et justitia.* He must be of

* Read the ninth lesson of the Feast of St. John Capistran, in the Roman Breviary, March 28.

Digitized by Google

a blameless life, a mirror of virtue for his people, a pattern for his flock. He must possess a lively faith in God and His Church, a spirit of prayer, a burning love for souls, a consciousness of his unworthiness and shortcomings. Of this last virtue the great St. Augustine says, referring it to the preacher: *Quanto videtur humilior, tanto altius alios non ventositate, sed soliditate transcendit* (*De Doct. Christ.*, n. 6). A contempt of praise and applause will be the natural consequence of deeply seated humility; and such a disdain of human applause is necessary in the man of God. *Etenim*, St. John Chrysostom says (l. c. v. 2), *si laudes aspernans non proferat doctrinam gratia et sale conditam, despicabilis apud multos evadit, nihil lucri . . . referens.* A charitable heart is ever diffusive; it wants to expand, to vent its warmth, to communicate it to others. This manifestation we call zeal. "Such a zeal," Cardinal Newman says, "poor and feeble though it be in us, has been the very life of the Church, and the breath of her preachers and missionaries in all ages. It was such a sacred fire which brought Our Lord from heaven, and which He desired, which He travailed, to communicate to all around Him. 'I am come to send fire on the earth,' He says, 'and what will I but that it be kindled?' . . . This has been the secret of the propagation of the Church from the very first, and will be to the end; this is why the Church, under the grace of God, to the surprise of the world, converts the nations, and why no sect can do the like; this is why Catholic missionaries throw themselves so generously among the fiercest savages, and risk the most cruel torments, as knowing the worth of the soul, as realizing the world to come, as loving their brethren dearly, though they never saw them, as shuddering at the thought of eternal woe, and as desiring to increase the fruit of their Lord's passion and the triumphs of His grace" (*Discourses to Mixed Congregations*).

Digitized by Google

4. **Knowledge** is essential to the office of the preacher. *Nemo dat quod non habet;* but it is his official duty to impart knowledge. *Labia sacerdotis custodient scientiam et legem requirent ex ore ejus* (Malach. ii. 7). His *scientia* must be *varia et multiplex*, St. Gregory Nazianzen says, giving as reason, *ut uniuscujusque animam sibi adjungat, apteque et apposite omnes alloquatur* (l. c. n. 44). The same Father explains: *Nam certe alias docere aggredi prius quam ipsi satis edocti simus . . . valde stultorum aut temerariorum esse mihi videtur: stultorum si ne inscitiam quidem suam agnoscant: temerariorum, si cum eam cognitam habeant, hoc tamen negotium aggredi non verentur* (l. c. n. 47). He then continues with bitter irony: *Sacer etiam ab incunabulis Samuel: statim sapientes et magistri sumus et in divinis rebus sublimes, et scribarum ac legisperitorum primi, ac coelestes nos ipsos designamus, et vocari ab hominibus rabbi expetimus . . . et nisi magnis laudibus efferamur, indignatione afficimur* (l. c. 49). The preacher is supposed to possess a fair knowledge of literature, philosophy, and theology.

(*a*) Literature.—The preacher must have a perfect command of the language he uses; for language is the medium for the communication of our thoughts. This medium must be transparent if it is to be useful. His language in announcing the word of God must be the choicest, though simple and natural; the richest, though clear as crystal. The Gospel he preaches is the priceless pearl of heaven. But to make it attractive and to show its beauty and value, he must set it in a neat and precious casing.* The preacher must choose the right word for the

* "Von Natur und Geburt sind wir alle Barbaren, sagte schon der alte Gracian in seinem 'Weltorakel'; Unterricht und Erziehung machen aus uns was wir sind. Und nun erst das Wort, die Gabe, die Macht des Wortes, diese edelste, höchste Blüte aller geistigen und sittlichen Bildung, in dem die ganze Ideenwelt sich offenbart, die Summe alles dessen, was der Mensch geworden, errungen und erstrebt hat,

Digitized by Google

right idea, and never use two words where one is sufficient; for it must be his constant endeavor not only to be understood distinctly, but also not to be misunderstood. He will avoid big words, if he knows his language thoroughly. He should read much and with discrimination: *non multa, sed multum.* The best authors are not too good for him. On the other hand, he must eschew the reading of novels, sensational magazines and newspapers, which gradually and imperceptibly vitiate good taste. While reading, he should take notes of striking ideas and classical expressions. We mention a few of the best models in English, German, and French Literature: In *English*, the works of Shakespeare, Longfellow, Washington Irving, Dickens, Wiseman, Newman, Manning, Faber, and Brownson. In *German*, Goethe, Schiller, Weber, Goerres, Sailer, Eberhard, Stolz, Hettinger, Baumgartner.—In *French*, Racine, Corneille, Bourdaloue, Bossuet, Fénélon, Lacordaire, Montalembert, Pie, Louis Veuillot.

sich darstellt, das sollte einem unbewussten Triebe, einem rohen, blinden Instincte entstammen? Das Wort, das den Glauben verkündet, die Kirche gegründet, den Irrthum überwunden, die Völker belehrt und gesittigt hat, das die Gnade zu ihrem Werkzeuge sich erwählt, durch das sie fort und fort Sünder bekehren, Geister erleuchten, Herzen entflammen, Heilige schaffen wollte,—das sollte nichts sein als eine Aeusserung unserer rohen, verderbten Natur? Steigen wir doch hinab in die Meerestiefen und holen da die leuchtende Perle heraus, graben wir tief in die Gebirge ein, um nach edlen Steinen zu suchen, mit denen wir das menschgewordene Wort im Tabernakel schmücken,—und keine Blume und kein Gold und kein Juwel ist uns kostbar genug, um unsere Ehrfurcht und Liebe auszudrücken zu dem verborgenen Wort Gottes unter dem Schleier der Gestalten. Und die Meisterwerke der Geschmeidekunst halten wir allein für würdig zu seiner Wohnung. Mehr als Gold und Silber, kostbarer als Perlen und Diamanten ist des Menschen Wort; denn alles jenes, sagte einmal Thomas von Aquin, ist Staub, hier aber ist unsterblicher Geist. Wer wollte darum es verschmähen oder tadeln, wenn wir Kunst und Fleiss aufbieten, um diesem menschgewordenen Gott durch unser Wort im Hymnus und Rede eine würdige Stätte zu bauen; geben wir ja auch dem Edelsteine eine kostbare Fassung." (Dr. Hettinger's *Aphorismen über Predigt und Prediger*, p. 7.)

Digitized by Google

(*b*) PHILOSOPHY.—In these days of superficial education and of sophistry, a sound philosophy is necessary for the teacher of truth: logic to think correctly; metaphysics to grapple with the profound questions of dogmatic theology; ethics to proclaim the solid principles of public morality and to give the proper solution of the burning questions of the day. Many are the questions that now agitate the public mind: the rights of property, the morality of suicide and of duelling; all the intricate phases of socialism. The modern enemies of the Church are to be met only on philosophical ground. A frequent return to a good text-book of philosophy will keep the preacher within safe lines.

(*c*) THEOLOGY.—Let us briefly glance at its various branches.

(*α*) *Biblical Studies.*—The Bible, the written word of God, is the best book under heaven for the study of sacred eloquence. The more deeply and seriously a priest has entered its hidden treasures and fed his soul on its richest pastures, the more the Sacred Text has penetrated his whole interior and is actually taking possession of his thoughts and feelings, the more constantly he lives in the Scriptures, the more eloquent he will be. Wherefore St. Augustine says: *Sapientes autem dicit homo magis aut minus, quanto in Scripturis sacris magis minusque profecit. . . . Ut quod dixerit suis verbis, probet ex illis* (*De Doct. Christ.* c. iv. 5). The preacher's mind should be colored with the imagery of the Bible, his heart glowing with its consolations, and his language fragrant with the perfume of its sublime truths. No human words, however sweet and charming, possess the unction which the words of Scripture have. They are understood by all, because they are the language of mankind. The Bible is truly the book for all. No other book has had the same inherent power to move hearts and enlighten minds in every clime and in every century, nor shall there exist another until the end of time. "The

Digitized by Google

Sacred Scriptures," says Hettinger, "according to the Council of Trent, are *eloquia divina* issued from the depths of the infinitely great, infinitely wise, and infinitely beautiful God, whose glance reaches into the very foundations of creation and penetrates the highest heights of heaven, encompassing all space and time. And again, they are the word of the Father, as sweet and tender as the soft evening breeze in which He made known His presence to the prophet. Why should the sacred words not be exalted above all the works of man, which are only sublime in as far as they approach the divine? Why should they not be full of superhuman consolation and beauty? Are we not, when reading them, looking, as it were, into the heart of God Himself?" (l. c. p. 223.) The Greek and Latin Fathers have taught us how to use the Holy Scriptures. They have lived and thought and felt and prayed in them and with them; they knew their inexhaustible treasures for the instruction of others. The first Christian sermon still extant, that of St. Clement of Rome (his second letter to the Corinthians), contains one hundred and twenty quotations from the Bible. The sermons of St. Ephrem and of St. Bernard are like beautiful carpets woven exclusively from texts of Holy Scripture. Imitating those shining examples of learning and sanctity, the priest should enter the sacred mine of truth and there dig for himself and find the precious metal with which to enrich his mind with noblest ideas and imbue his heart with the graces of the Lord, who alone can open to him the sense of His word and show him its right and useful application to his people. Through the Breviary and the Missal the priest is kept in daily contact with the Bible, and derives a wonderful insight into its meaning. But this will not suffice: he must accustom himself to the daily, reverent, and intelligent reading of the Bible. He should have a good edition, with notes, such as that of Allioli, Loch and Reischl, MacEvilly, Kenrick, Fillion, Beelen. Let us never

Digitized by Google

forget the words of St. Jerome to Eustochium: *Tenenti codicem somnus obrepat, et cadentem faciem pagina sancta suscipiat.*

(β) *Dogmatic and Moral Theology.*—In his parish or mission the priest is the defender of the true faith; he has to keep intact the *depositum fidei* and defend it against the attacks of heretics and infidels. Catholic people look to the priest as the born champion of their holy religion; they expect him to answer any serious objections raised against the Christian faith and morals. How applicable to our condition and circumstances in America are the words of St. Chrysostom: *Maxime omnium peritum esse oportet eum, qui alienorum docendorum munus sortitus est. Nam etiamsi tutus ipse perstet nihil ab adversariis laesus, at subditorum simpliciorum multitudo, cum viderit ducem superatum nihil posse adversariis opponere, non infirmitatem ejus, sed dogmatis imbecillitatem prostratam esse putabant. Atque ob unius imperitiam multus populus in extremam perniciem dejicitur.... Quanta vero pernicies quantusque ignis in miserum caput illius pro singulis pereuntibus coacervetur, non opus est ut a me discas* (l. c., n. 9).—The priest's earnest and really deep studies begin after he leaves the seminary, where he was taught how to study and how to use books. Practical life, experience in the care of souls, provocation from friends and enemies,—these will be to him incentives for intelligent and solid study. He should have at his command good authors: *Summa Theol.* of St. Thomas, Suarez, de Lugo, Perrone, Hurter, Lehmkuhl.

(γ) *Canon Law.*—Christ established His Church as a well-organized kingdom, with rulers and subjects. The statutes, rules, and enactments for the government of the Church are called Canon Law. In the framing of her laws the Church is guided by the Holy Spirit, who gives them a more than human authority. The priest as representative

Digitized by Google

of the Church must announce the ecclesiastical ordinances as he does those of the divine and natural law. All that the Church has decreed about feasts and fasts, about the sacraments, especially about marriage, must be familiar to the pastor, who has to see to the faithful observance of such laws and regulations. Nor can he ignore, without prejudice to his high position, the many special prescriptions for the various duties of his sacred ministry which will render his services all the more effective. Among the principal (complete and partial) commentaries on canon law we mention the works of Engel, Pirhing, Schmalzgrueber, Santi, Barbosa (*De Parocho*), Philips, Soglia, Vering, De Becker, Messmer, and Péries.

(δ) *Church History.*—Melchior Canus holds that "one ignorant of Church history does not merit the name of theologian." Church history is the record of God's kingdom on earth in its origin, growth, progress, spread, and influence among the nations of the earth. Its central figure is Jesus Christ. It is the story of the spirit triumphant over the flesh, of heroic deeds for truth and charity's sake, of angelic lives meekly laid down for the heavenly Master, of joy, peace, and fortitude. "It gives us," as Staudenmaier remarks, "the clearest idea of what the Catholic Church should be." In ecclesiastical history the preacher will find the proofs for the divinity of the Church herself; through it he will understand the present, and from it he will draw luminous examples to place before his hearers for emulation and admiration. The following manuals may prove serviceable to a priest: Wouters (Latin), Alzog (German and English), Palma (Latin), Hergenroether (German and French), Hefele-Knoepfler (German).

(ε) *Liturgy.*—The great liturgical works of the Church are the Missal, the Breviary, the Ritual, and the Pontifical. In these four books the priest will find ideas that will

Digitized by Google

surely electrify and move. The spirit of truth and love breathes in them; they contain beauties ancient and ever new. The Bible is the language of God; liturgy is the language of His spouse, the Catholic Church. A constant study and use of it will open treasures of the richest lore for sermons and instructions. Liturgy is like a painting of Murillo—the longer you look at it, the more artistic and charming features you will discover in it which you can point out to others. What wealth of matter in the Masses of the different feasts and seasons! Then, for occasional sermons, at the laying of corner-stones, dedication of churches, consecration of bishops, ordination of priests, profession or reception of nuns, where could you find more really interesting, instructive, and edifying matter than in those very prayers which the Church uses on these solemn occasions? Again, what wholesome food for pious reflection is not to be found in those grand old hymns of the Church: *Te Deum laudamus; Salve Regina; Dies irae; Stabat Mater; Veni, Sancte Spiritus; Jesu dulcis memoria?* What national literature can boast of literary gems such as are found in Catholic liturgy? "There is not," Hettinger says (l. c.), "in the whole literature of all the nations of the West anything so sweet and tender, and yet so sublime and grand, as the Preface for the consecration of a bishop in the *Pontificale Romanum: Abundet in eo constantia fidei, puritas dilectionis, sinceritas pacis. . . . Da ei, Domine, ministerium reconciliationis in verbo et in factis. . . . Sit sollicitudine impiger; sit spiritu fervens; oderit superbiam, humilitatem ac veritatem diligat, neque eam unquam deserat, aut laudibus aut timoribus superatus. Non ponat lucem tenebras nec tenebras lucem; non dicat malum bonum nec bonum malum. Sit sapientibus et insipientibus debitor,*" etc. Dom Guéranger's *Liturgical Year* gives the literal and spiritual meaning of the sacred rites and ceremonies

Digitized by Google

throughout the ecclesiastical year. Other valuable books for this branch are: *The Catholic Manual of Prayer*, Wiseman's *Lectures on the Ceremonies of Holy Week*, Butler's *Feasts and Fasts*, O'Brien's *History of the Mass*, Gihr's *Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* (German and French), Lambrecht's *De s. Missae sacrificio*, Goffine.

(ζ) *The Fathers of the Church. Longa via per praecepta, brevis per exempla.*—Our blessed Lord is the highest ideal for the apostolic preacher; He must live in his heart. But Christ is more than man. We naturally look for something human. The Fathers of the Church are the best models for pulpit oratory. Instructed in the classic literature, especially of Rome and Athens, impregnated with the spirit of the Gospel, they have searched and laid open the depths of theology and preached the word of God with a clearness and charm that will win for them the admiration of all times. Whatever orators the Church has had in the past were undoubtedly fashioned after the example and by the study of the Fathers. "Bossuet only reproduced St. Augustine" (Villemain). Cardinal Newman has given us the best sketches, in English, of the great Fathers of the East and West; whilst Dr. Hurter has put within easy reach the cream of patristic literature by his meritorious and scholarly publication of the *opuscula selecta sanctorum Patrum.*

§ 3.

Preparation.

1. If the Christian is required to prepare his soul before praying to God, how much more is it necessary for the preacher to prepare himself before speaking in the name of God? He should be fully conscious of his tremendous office, entirely forgetful of himself, and thirsting

Digitized by Google

for immortal souls. *Da mihi animas!* He cannot content himself with less. With prayer he must begin in order to nerve his spirit for the great work. *Orando pro se ac pro illis, quos est allocuturus, sit orator antequam dictor. Ipsa hora jam ut dicat accedens, priusquam exserat proferentem linguam, ad Deum levet animam sitientem, ut eructet quod biberit, vel quod impleverit fundat* (St. Aug. l. c., n. 15).

2. Not every priest is chosen to be an orator—a Bossuet or a Burke; but every priest who has the care of souls is bound in conscience to use all his energy, to employ his knowledge, his industry, and all the other gifts which the Lord granted him, to announce the Gospel with power, dignity, and fruit.

3. The orator is not born, nor does he fall from the sky; *orator fit.* History tells us how our great pulpit orators became masters of sacred eloquence through long years of prayer and mortification, by deep and continued study of the sacred sciences, especially the study of the Bible. Every priest may become a good and an effective preacher if, trusting in God's assistance, he uses rightly the faculties of his soul and body; and thus he may accomplish for his own generation what the Fathers and Doctors of old did for theirs.

4. But hard work is necessary—work that cannot be dispensed with, despite years or long practice. *Etenim cum eloquentiam non natura, sed disciplina pariat, licet ad summum ejus apicem quis pervenerit, ab illa certe destituetur, nisi assidue studio et exercitatione illam excoluerit.* These are the words of that magnificent pulpit orator, St. John Chrysostom (l. c., v. 5). Even for one possessed of the best powers as a natural orator the adage will hold good: *Qui ascendit sine labore, descendit sine honore.* No matter how learned and experienced a man may be, if he attempts to preach without preparation, he may *talk* well and use

Digitized by Google

fine gestures, but he will say little or nothing of any permanent value to his hearers.

5. Whilst an overweening confidence in their natural gifts leads many to dispense with the hard labor of careful preparation, we find others prevented from accomplishing much by a lack of courage. We should remember that the possible is within our reach. If a young priest convinces himself that he has the necessary talent, if he will only try, difficulties will gradually vanish before his energy; he may be sure to succeed in announcing the word of God in a manner which will attract, not only by its plain, good language, but frequently by a certain originality which comes from sincere effort. Truth is old, the manner of preaching may be ever new, as God gives new gifts to every individual preacher.

6. It is well for a young preacher especially to realize his defects, but he should never lose courage though there may be much to be criticised. It is easy to detect faults and imperfections in a speaker. Cicero remarks: *Adest enim nemo, quin acutius atque acrius vitia in docente quam recta videat* (*De Orat.* i. 25). Adverse criticisms should never discourage a preacher; people who readily criticise are empty-headed or evil-hearted; their opinion is unworthy of notice.

7. In making the immediate preparation for the composition of his sermon the preacher must strive to free his mind *ab omnibus vanis, perversis et alienis cogitationibus*, by asking the Holy Spirit to kindle in him the fire of divine love, by beseeching the *sedes sapientiae* for the wisdom of the saints, by humbly saying: *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis; sed nomini tuo da gloriam* (Ps. cxiii.); by forming the pure intention of pleasing God: *haec enim ejus norma, hic terminus artificii debet esse, non plausus vel laudes* (St. Chrysostom, l. c. v. 1).

8. The first and most important work is to find the

Digitized by Google

matter, not to steal it. The use of topics, the invention of thoughts, is of the highest importance; wherefore Cicero said: "*Reperire primum quid diceret*" (l. c. i. 31). All the rest, such as style, elocution, and action, are only of secondary importance; they will be the consequence of the first. *Rerum copia verborum copiam gignit. Ex rerum cognitione efflorescat et redundet oportet oratio* (*ibidem*). Topology (τόποι = *loci, sedes argumentorum*), however, belongs to the study of rhetoric. We merely mention the principal intrinsic topics: definition, enumeration, genus, species; notation, conjugates; cause, effect, antecedents, consequences; comparison, contrariety, likeness, likelihood. Comparison cannot be used too often, as most people judge by comparison. A shorter and very practical way to find ideas is the answering of the celebrated:

Quis? Quid? Ubi? Quibus auxiliis? Cur? Quomodo? Quando?

9. No man is creative in the strict sense of the word. The material of our thoughts are our knowledge of self, our experience, all we have ever thought, felt, read and heard. That which gives originality to our speech is simply conception and combination. The work of a musical composer consists in combination, not in the invention of new scales or sounds. Others have said the same that we have to say, but not in the same way. It does not require genius to become a good preacher, but zeal, charity, and piety are qualifications absolutely necessary to him whose task is to offer balm, to heal, to strengthen, to encourage, to elevate, and to inflame.

10. We would say to the preacher: do not slavishly copy the sermons of any man, but use your intelligence in meditating on your subject, dividing it, looking for arguments and illustrations to support its thesis. After you have thought the subject over and digested the matter, then we would suggest the reading of a good sermon on the same

Digitized by Google

subject, nor is there any reason why we should not make the thoughts and expressions of another our own when they are calculated to impress the hearer forcibly. But it must be remembered, on the whole, our own sermons, however deficient and poor they may be, will have a better effect on *our* people than those of Bourdaloue or other great orators, because their sermons will never suit our habits of thought nor those of our people.

11. Have a distinct purpose, and avoid vague and irrelevant ideas. And when your mind is filled with ideas, take your pen and write; yes, write, *always* write your sermons, no matter how short or for what occasions they are intended to be. Even the so-called *five-minute sermons* should be written. But if you find absolutely no time to write your sermon or even to sketch it, you should at least take time to get a subject, divide it, meditate on it, say a few fervent prayers, and be not "like a man who tempteth God."

§ 4.

What to Preach.

1. St. Paul tells the Corinthians (2, iv. 5): "We preach not ourselves, but Christ our Lord."* We have the most glorious theme that could be proposed to human speech: *Christ and Him crucified.* This is the central truth of our holy religion. The lips of the priest should deliver it as the message of divine love and forgiveness, and constantly teach, in pointing to the crucified Redeemer, the lessons of God's wisdom and charity and justice and His hatred of sin, and, on the other hand, the value of our souls, our ingratitude and baseness, and the reasons of our hope and

* And not even Christ would preach Himself, as He distinctly declares: *Verba quae ego loquor, a meipso non loquor* (St. John xiv. 10).

Digitized by Google

strength. *Quamobrem in eo praecipue Ecclesiastici Doctoris opera versabitur, ut fideles scire ex animo cupiant Jesum Christum, et hunc crucifixum: sibique certo persuadeant, atque intima cordis pietate et religione credant, aliud nomen non esse datum hominibus sub coelo, in quo oporteat nos salvos fieri* (*Catech. Rom.*).

2. No orator has such a large field to gather from as the preacher. The whole divine truth is at his disposal. Nature and revelation must be at his command; heaven and earth must serve his high purpose. Why? St. Paul answers you: *Omnia enim vestra sunt: vos autem Christi, Christus autem Dei* (1 Cor. iii. 22).

3. Preach *dogmatical* sermons: they are of an especial necessity at the present day in America, the very foundations of the Christian religion being attacked. But do not start to prove the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, the Real Presence. There will be few in your audience in whose minds ever arose the least doubt against these truths. Let your arguments serve to strengthen the faith in these doctrines and to produce a deeper realization of them. Frequently dwell on the supremacy of the Pope of Rome; on the one holy Church founded by God, and not by man; on the necessity of belonging to this Church, outside of which there is no salvation possible. Let sound dogma be the underlying basis of all your sermons and instructions; it will keep you from extremes and exaggerations.

4. Show the dogma of the Church in all its beauty, without suggesting doubts about it. You may occasionally give a look of pity at some prevailing error and commiserate the ignorance of weak-minded people or abhor the malice of depraved men, but do not give importance to heresy and unbelief by dwelling on them. The darkness of falsehood vanishes before the noonday splendor of truth as clouds do before the rays of the sun. Here the words of

Digitized by Google

Leo the Great are applicable: *Christi Evangelium hac arte non indiget, in quo doctrina veritatis sua luce manifestata est* (Ep. 164). The *Catechismus Romanus* and Cardinal Gibbons' *Faith of our Fathers* will furnish abundant subject-matter for dogmatical sermons.

5. Every dogma has its moral lesson. There should be no such thing as a purely moral sermon. A professor of theology may draw a line of distinction between "dogma" and "moral;" a preacher cannot do it practically. By setting forth the truth in all its vigor and the religion of the Man-God in its sublimity, with all the remedies for all human miseries, the moral lessons will suggest themselves. If you desire to preach moral sermons, then show Christ as the model for the perfect Christian, in His life of self-denial, in His hidden life of daily labor in a mechanic's shop, in His submission to His parents, in His apostolic life of hardship and privation; show how He became poor to make us rich and truly happy.

6. Preach the Gospel of Christ. Preach homilies on the Gospel. A homily is an explanation of a part of Scripture, with a practical lesson on the same. It is the original form of sacred oratory, as we learn from ecclesiastical history. The homiletic form of preaching is the most difficult one of all. Many look upon it as easy to preach on the Sunday gospel, to give a homily; yet it requires more study and meditation than any other kind of sermon. To say even a few words on the gospel is exceedingly laborious, and demands the most careful preparation. The matter is so rich and varied that it takes time to digest and classify and apply it to the wants of the people. Still it is the most practical and effective way to familiarize people with the gospel, and through it with the divine personality of our blessed Lord. Each Sunday's gospel furnishes homiletic matter for a lifetime: the gospel is exhaustless, because it is divine.

Digitized by Google

7. On feast-days the preacher must make the mysteries celebrated in honor of Our Lord or His holy Mother the subject of his sermons. He must try at all times and on every given occasion to spread and to cultivate in the hearts of his hearers a tender devotion to Mary immaculate and a childlike confidence in her power of intercession. "She is the beautiful gift of God, which outshines the fascinations of a bad world, and which no one ever sought in sincerity and was disappointed" (Newman, *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*).

8. Panegyrics of the saints are illustrations of the Gospel, offered by those who were of the same clay as we are, and were surrounded on earth by similar temptations and trials, but who faithfully walked in the footsteps of their divine Saviour and are now looking down upon us from heaven, cheering us to do likewise and to expect a like reward. An account of the principal features of their holy lives or a consideration of their characteristic virtues will bear good fruit.

9. It will be profitable to have a course of sermons for Lent and also for Advent. During the weeks of Advent sermons on sin, its guilt and punishment, the necessity of a Redeemer, the condition of mankind before Christ, the Sacrament of Penance, prayer, grace, will be appropriate, and prepare the hearts of the faithful for the coming blessings of Christmas. Lent presents us the cross of Christ for meditation: *Vexilla regis prodeunt, fulget crucis mysterium.* It is truly the best book for Lent. The Passion of Our Lord is a never-failing theme for powerful and fruitful sermons. Even a simple recital of the history of the bitter Passion has a wonderful effect on the Christian heart, and makes impressions that time and sin cannot always efface.

10. So many other occasions appear during the course of the year, of which the preacher can profit by inculcating

Digitized by Google

salutary lessons without wearying the people. Such occasions are: the death and election of a pope, a bishop, or a priest; first Mass or sacerdotal jubilee; first communions; funerals; marriages; investing or profession of religious; blessing of churches and educational or charitable institutions. Let no such opportunities pass, the people are especially prepared to receive the *semen seminantis*; it will fall on good ground. For some it will be the first chance after many years to hear again the word of God, and to be turned to better ways. *Praedica verbum; insta opportune, importune: argue, obsecra, increpa in omni patientia et doctrina* (2 Tim. iv. 2).

§ 5.

What Not to Preach.

There are defects which arise from a lack of judgment and reflection, or else from a want of experience in dealing with men. They may be referred principally to the treatment or mention in the pulpit of certain topics, some of which should never be heard from the lips of the preacher, while others should be so handled as to make them subservient or contributory to the enforcement of truth and virtue—subjects which are to be forever the themes of the minister of truth and guardian of innocence. For the purpose of bringing home more directly our meaning and aim, we have put our argument in form of cautions, indicating the "never" of preaching:

1. Never make money the subject of your sermon. You may have to speak about a collection or pew-rent or some other revenue of the church. It is the sacred duty of most priests in the United States to do so; it is a serious and important part of his ministry. Nevertheless, leave it out of your sermons or instructions. This matter belongs

Digitized by Google

to the "announcements," which should be made in an earnest and dignified, though kind and fatherly, manner, before the reading of the Sunday gospel. Even then the words used should show forth consideration and prudence. The Third Council of Baltimore is clear on the money question: *De stipendiorum aut reddituum tenuitate saepe saepius verba facere, praesertim asperiori modo, summopere dedecet ministrum Christi et locum sacrum.* Cardinal Gibbons adds: "The preacher that substitutes the gospel of selfish greed for the Gospel of Christ desecrates the house of God, like the money-changers whom Our Lord drove from the Temple; he dishonors his ministry; he detracts from the reverence which is due to his sacred profession" (*The Ambassador of Christ*, p. 275).

2. NEVER preach on vice; that is, never make any vice directly and nominally the subject of your preaching. Graphic descriptions of vice destroy the shy tenderness of conscience, and disturb the peace and tranquillity of innocent souls. Therefore never preach on drunkenness, impurity, theft, cursing, and so forth, but preach on temperance, purity, honesty, the sacredness of God's name. What do the people gain from those formidable sermons on vice? Some will imitate the Pharisee, and thank God that they are not like those "painted red" by the preacher; others will feel guilty, ashamed, and embittered on account of having been exposed; others may even be taught the "mystery of iniquity," perhaps be enticed to sin; others will, again, wonder, and ask, Where did the preacher get his knowledge of vice? Generally speaking, the audience is not composed of great sinners, but of weak, lukewarm Christians, who realize their shortcomings, and need encouragement rather than condemnation.

3. NEVER mention persons nor allude to individuals, censuring them or finding fault with them. It could not produce any good, but cause injury to others and yourself.

Digitized by Google

Nomina semper sint odiosa. Concionator neminem adstantium, quae intolerabilis audacia foret, nominatim reprehendat, aut insidiosa verborum circuitione ita notet designetque ut ab omnibus nosci facile possit (Conc. Balt. III. 215).

4. NEVER resent in the pulpit any personal injury. You are in God's place: forget yourself completely. Erase the letter "I" from your vocabulary. Do not profane the sacred office with personal grievances. The Second Council of Baltimore warns the preacher: *Ad privatam injuriam ulciscendam sacro loco et tempore abuti nequaquam audeat.*

5. NEVER scold nor speak in anger; rather praise on every lawful opportunity. It does not require much skill or any extraordinary talent to scold people or use harsh language for the purpose of correcting them. Do not interrupt your sermon to rebuke people who cough, laugh, talk, or come late; such comments are sure to spoil the good effect of your preaching.

6. NEVER ridicule people or imitate their peculiarities in manner or language. The "Irish brogue," the "German accent," the "Canadian dialect" may amuse people at a "variety show;" they should never be the cause of merriment or disapprobation in the house of the Lord.

7. NEVER attack any profession as such. Remarks like the following are unchristian: "Doctors are all quacks; they kill more people than they cure. Lawyers are rogues who cheat the people; they have no conscience, but are only looking for their own interests. Beware of school-teachers;" and so forth.

8. NEVER blame people for their nationality; never ascribe to them *national* sins, saying, the Germans are misers, the Irish are drunkards, the Italians are murderers. The preacher must be above nationalism; he must hate and detest it as a vice which he has the duty to root out if it

291513 Google

exist in his congregation. "For there is no distinction of the Jew and the Greek: for the same is Lord over all, rich unto all that call upon Him" (Rom. x. 12).

9. NEVER speak against American institutions or customs; nor belittle them by praising foreign laws, habits, and practices. Love the land that protects you, and the great government which never interferes with the free and bold announcement of Christ's holy religion.

10. NEVER attack Protestants as such, though you may have occasion to show that Protestantism is inconsistent and untrue. Attacking Protestants does not convert them; on the contrary, it irritates and often prevents conversion. Speak always kindly of Protestants as our "dissenting brethren," our "Protestant friends;" and real friends they often are and show themselves. *Non sinet ut heterodoxis, si qui forte concioni adsint, justa detur offensae causa* (Conc. Balt. III. 215).

11. NEVER use irony or sarcasm or words of contempt in the pulpit when speaking of persons. Such methods of speech inflict wounds that rarely or never heal. Christ sent us to cure and not to wound, to offer the soothing balm and the healing and strengthening oil of His doctrine; He gave us the *ministerium reconciliationis.*

12. NEVER make use of silly jokes or vulgar stories in the Church to produce merriment. If you find that some great preachers have told funny and amusing things in the pulpit and caused roars of laughter in the audience, kindly remember: *Quod licet Jovi, non licet bovi.* People do not attend church to be amused by the priest.

> "He that negotiates between God and man,
> As God's ambassador, the great concerns
> Of judgment and of mercy, should beware
> Of lightness in his speech. 'Tis pitiful
> To court a grin, when one should woo a soul."—COWPER.

13. NEVER speak about local politics or the political parties of the country, neither in praise nor condemnation.

Digitized by Google

We are working for Christ's kingdom, not for political influence; wherefore the Third Council of Baltimore gives preachers the *caveant ne temere de rebus politicis aut aliis quae minime ad eorum ministerium pertinent sermones ad populum faciant.* In church our Catholic people seek rest from the noise and bustle of every-day life, from the discordant sounds of human strife and warring politics. They come to church to free their minds from the disagreeable scenes of the world; they have no desire to be reminded of political discussions and sensational newspaper talk.

14. Never preach on any subject which is purely secular. The end of all preaching must be the salvation of souls. Temporal prosperity, national progress, and the like, are not the proper subjects for sermons. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all other things will be added unto you" (Matt. vi. 33).

15. Never introduce in your sermon interpretations of Holy Scripture which are contrary to the received sense of the Church and the Holy Fathers. *Evangelium ergo illibatum diligenter et absque ullius erroris suspicione concionator sacer exponat* (Conc. Balt. III.). Do not use Protestant commentaries. Why go to the turbid fountain when the limpid stream of Catholic science is flowing by your side? Protestant writers may throw a natural charm on the sacred page, but we are thirsting for the beauty supernatural.

16. Never relate doubtful stories in your sermons, no matter how applicable they appear. Not even the shadow of untruth must ever darken the Catholic pulpit, the chair of truth. *Ineptae autem et aniles fabulae ne e suggestu enarrentur ipsa ratio suadet. Hoc modo doctrina Catholica non illustratur, sed acatholicorum ludibrio exponitur cum rubore et scandalo fidelium* (Conc. Balt. l. c.).

17. Never speak about new revelations, visions, mir-

Digitized by Google

acles that have no solid foundation or that have not been investigated and approved by the bishop of the diocese or the Holy See. *Charissimi, nolite omni spiritui credere, sed probate spiritus si ex Deo sint: quoniam multi pseudoprophetae exierunt in mundum* (1 John iv. 1). The preacher's field is sufficiently large to offer him abundance of matter. Why leave the solid territory of divine revelation?

18. NEVER discuss theological opinions or advert to controversies among Catholic theologians. Theological opinions belong to the school of theology and not to the pulpit, where no question should ever be treated so as to suggest doubts regarding a Catholic doctrine. People would be scandalized to hear that learned men in the Church cannot agree in matters of religion, even though their disagreement be about non-essentials.

19. NEVER speak about the particular time of the Last Judgment, or the time of Antichrist's arrival, or similar declarations resting upon some private prophecies, though ascribed to holy men. *Ad quid bonum?* What good effect have such questions on your people? St. Paul calls them *inutiles et vanae.* God does not want us to inquire about the time which He has reserved to Himself.

20. NEVER exaggerate the truth in the pulpit, especially in its application to every-day life. Follow the golden *via media.* Sermons, *ex professo*, on the small number of the elect, on the narrow road that leads to heaven, and so forth, seldom produce conversions, but very frequently discouragement.

21. NEVER minimize the Catholic faith for fear of offending people. Give the full truth, no matter how harsh it may sound at first and how bitter it may taste. Elegant phrases will not create any happiness in hell, nor will they save people wilfully dwelling outside of the one saving Church. Faith is truth, and truth is life. Our Lord assures us that His truth shall make us free. It will give us the

Digitized by Google

true liberty of the children of God, by freeing the mind from ignorance and the heart from sin. Banish timidity by invoking the mighty Spirit of God. *Melius est laudabile bellum pace a Deo disjungente: ob eamque causam lenem et mansuetum hominem Spiritus ad pugnam armat, ut qui bellum recte gerere queat* (St. Greg. Naz. *De Fuga*, n. 82).

22. NEVER speak on subjects the knowledge of which came to you solely through the confessional. Never say: "I heard in confession," or "a man told me in confession one day," and so forth. People would surely be scandalized, as they consider (erroneously) such expressions a revelation of sins, a breaking of the *sigillum*.

23. NEVER speak against civil or spiritual authority. "Honor to whom honor is due," says the Apostle. "There is no authority," either civil or spiritual, "which is not from God." Therefore authority is something divine. Never speak against the President of the Union, the Governor of the State, the Mayor of the City, and so forth. Foster respect for authority, all the more since thoughtful men remark that this respect is decreasing in the United States. Above all, cultivate a sincere reverence in the people for the ecclesiastical authority. Never say a disrespectful word of a priest, bishop, or the Pope. You are not constituted a judge. The priest is to be judged by his bishop, the bishop by the Pope, the Pope by God alone. This is the God-given order which we must preach to the people. The famous Savonarola would deserve a place on our altars had he but observed this rule.

24. NEVER attack the public schools, condemning them in a wholesale manner, calling them sinks of iniquity, hotbeds of vice, schools for paupers. The American public school is an excellent institution, as far as it goes. Nothing prevents you from often insisting on the necessity of religious education for Catholic children, proving that

Digitized by Google

the public schools are defective or insufficient for the education of the whole man.

25. NEVER preach on fashion, condemning certain styles of dress, headgear of ladies, bangs, and so forth. *Praeterit enim figura hujus mundi.* Fashion, like the world itself, continually changes, and you will not stop the changing. Preaching against fashion will produce either amusement or irritation, but no good whatsoever. Americans have little to complain of on the score of modesty in dress. Nowhere in the world is Christian decorum better observed in this respect than in America, especially with ladies.

These are some of the shoals and rocks of which the preacher must steer clear that his words may not lose their intended effect.

§ 6.

Necessary Qualities of a Good Sermon.

THE THREE P'S.

The ancient Roman required three qualities essential in a good oration: *instructio, delectatio et persuasio.* The orator's duty was: *Docere, delectare et movere.* In sacred oratory these requisites are still more imperative. St. Augustine insists that the preacher announce the Gospel in such a manner, *ut veritas pateat, placeat et moveat* (*De Doct. Ch.* iv. 28). A good sermon should have three p's: it should be plain, pleasant, and persuasive.

Plain.

1. The sermon must be plain in order to be instructive. Our Lord commissioned His apostles and their successors in the priesthood to "*teach* all nations." To teach what?

Digitized by Google

To observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them. This is the primary idea of preaching. The preacher must therefore strive to impart a clear, distinct, and definite idea of the subject on which he is preaching. Instruction precedes conversion; to move the heart he first must move the intellect. Explanation and illustration are the two principal means for producing clear ideas in the heads of his hearers. Very few people understand abstract ideas or truths, such as love, faith, honor, sanctity.

2. The plainest and simplest sermons ever preached are those of our divine Lord: they abound in parables and illustrations taken from daily life and surrounding circumstances which cannot fail to be intelligible to all.* The most sublime of all prophets is Isaias; yet how plain and simple the language he uses! The greatest pulpit orators of the Catholic Church are also models of plain simplicity.

3. The preacher should be plain, but not irksome. *Si qua ars est dicentium, ea prima est, ne ars esse videatur* (Quintil. i. 11). How beautifully the great St. Gregory puts it in hom. 13 in Evang. (Lesson 7, in the office of *Conf. non Pont.*): *Sancti Evangelii, fratres carissimi, aperta est vobis lectio recitata. Sed ne aliquibus ipsa ejus planities alta fortasse videatur, eam sub brevitate transcurrimus, quatenus ejus expositio ita nescientibus fiat cognita, ut tamen scientibus non sit onerosa.* Here we have it: the learned and the ignorant must profit from the sermon and fully understand every word spoken. Plain and simple is the language of the Bible; it speaks to all and nourishes the simple-minded and most intelligent alike. Wherefore St. Gregory uses the quaint simile: *Sacra scriptura, quasi quidam fluvius, in quo et agnus ambulet et elephas natat* (*Ep. ad Leand.* iv.). The nearer the

* "A child could understand His words; they were as transparent as the light. . . . It was the intelligence of God Incarnate speaking to man in human speech. It was Truth Himself in articulate words penetrating the intelligence of men." (Cardinal Manning's *Eternal Priesthood.*)

Digitized by Google

preacher's words approach those of the Bible, the plainer they will be to all, without ever becoming trivial.

4. Do not address anybody in particular, but all present. Do not preach to the "enlightened" in your congregation: to a judge, a lawyer, a doctor, or some public-school teachers; preach to all for whom Christ shed His precious blood. What good can you accomplish by preaching a so-called *showy* sermon, with flowery language and flights of oratory! At the solemnities of the consecration of a large church I heard a preacher treat the subject of "science and religion." It was a splendid essay on the harmonious relation between faith and science. Some rich and highly cultured Protestants admired the knowledge and sagacity of the orator; but the people who had paid for the erection of the church understood nothing of "the great effort" of eloquence, and comforted themselves with the fact that the sermon was not intended for them. A grand opportunity for an effective sermon was lost forever.

5. St. Chrysostom said of his time: *Magna Ecclesiae pars ex idiotis constat* (l. c. v. 6). In our own time and country people are even less instructed in religious matters than in the days of the golden-mouthed John. A terrible ignorance about the most elementary truths of our faith prevails even among our educated classes. An American missionary priest, Rev. A. A. Lambing, whose opinion on pastoral questions is always received with grateful respect by his fellow-priests, says on this point: "There is no doubt that the cause of religion is suffering, in this country at least, from the ignorance of Catholics, and this is true not only of the rank and file, but is especially true and more strikingly apparent in those who pass for learned, and who are learned in all else but the one thing necessary. How few of our learned Catholics are able to answer a dozen ordinary questions in the catechism with precision!

Digitized by Google

I have heard more than a hundred thousand confessions, and it is very common to meet with persons who, though they have been confessing for thirty or forty years, are unable to say the act of contrition correctly. The best-instructed Catholics I have ever met are certain farmers or tradesmen who take *The Poor Man's Catechism*, or some such work, and master it; but it is as a rule useless to expect religious knowledge among those who pass for learned. When are they seen to consult a religious work? When are such books seen in their library? Some may occasionally want to know why the Church is so far behind the age; but this only betrays their ignorance. After more than twenty years of experience in city, town, and country, and after preaching more than five thousand times, I am thoroughly convinced of what I say. The preacher, then, it must be repeated, should start out with the well-grounded conviction that his people are to a great extent ignorant of the precise teachings of their religion, and that he is there by divine commission to instruct them. This conviction will guide him in the selection of his themes, his train of thought, his arguments, and his illustrations" (*American Ecclesiastical Review*, September, 1892). One cause of the ignorance in religious matters of so many educated American Catholics is that their reading is confined to light magazines, novels, and newspapers.

6. It is more difficult for a young priest to preach a *plain* sermon than for a preacher of riper years and useful experience; for it is only through experience and continual study that this quality is acquired. Most of the eminent theologians of the Church were popular preachers, because they preached *plain* sermons; we mention only a few: St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, St. Thomas, St. Bernard, St. Alphonsus. In English we possess model *plain* sermons in the *Discourses to Mixed Congregations* of the great Cardinal Newman.

Digitized by Google

7. Preachers should frequently dwell on the following words of the *Catechismus Romanus: Id vero Apostolus in seipso omnibus observandum indicavit cum ad Rom. I. dixit se Graecis et Barbaris debitorem esse: ut videlicet intelligerent, qui ad hoc ministerium vocati sunt, ita in tradendis fidei mysteriis ac vitae praeceptis doctrinam ad audientium sensum atque intelligentiam accomodari oportere: ut, cum eorum animos, qui excitatos sensus habent, spirituali cibo expleverint, ne interim parvulos fame perire patiantur, ut qui panem petunt, et non sit qui frangat eis. . . . Si ipsa aeterni Patris sapientia in terras descendit, ut in carnis nostrae humilitate, coelestis vitae praecepta nobis traderet; quem non compellat charitas Christi, ut parvulus fiat in medio fratrum suorum, et tamquam nutrix fovens filios suos* (*Thess.* ii.) *ita cupide proximorum salutem desideret ut, quod de seipso Apostolus ibidem testatur, eis velit non solum Evangelium Dei, sed etiam animam tradere* (Quaest. xi.).

8. To be plain does not mean to be vulgar, or to use rough, commonplace expressions or slang. It would be simply abominable to hear words from the pulpit that savor of the street, the saloon, or the political caucus. It is a fatal mistake to affect a plain language by vulgar expressions; but it is equally detrimental to speak plainly about things that are offensive to Christian ears, or, as the saying goes, to call the child by its right name. Even Cicero says: *Quae natura occultavit, eadem omnes, qui sana mente sunt, removent ab oculis* (*De Offic.* i. 35).

Pleasant.

1. A good sermon delights the heart and refreshes the mind of the hearer. *Quod verum est bonum, quod bonum est pulchrum, quod pulchrum delectat, quod delectat amatur, quod amatur facile suscipitur.* This is the logical growth of truth in the soul of man. And, although truth

Digitized by Google

carries its own charm, and is ever eloquent; or, as St. Augustine puts it, *tamquam inseparabilem famulam etiam non vocatam sequitur eloquentia sapientiam* (l. c., iv. c. 6), yet truth will become more attractive when presented with order, when arrayed in the garb of beauty; for beauty is splendor of order, and order is always pleasant, while disorder and confusion are always repulsive.

2. The preacher is not allowed to discard the rules of logic and oratory. Eloquence is an art, and as such it has its fixed rules and principles. All these rules must be scrupulously observed: their violation would disturb harmony, and cause the sermon to lack in the necessary quality of being pleasant.

3. Moreover, the mysteries of our holy religion must be presented to the faithful as realities. "The mysteries of religion," Renninger says, "are not mere facts of a past history, but they find a continual fulfilment in human souls" (*Pastoraltheologie*, § 138). The preacher is to bring about this realization of religion by the living word; this enables him to say, with St. Paul, to his spiritual children: *In Christo Jesu ego vos genui, quos iterum parturio donec formetur Christus in vobis* (Gal. iv. 19). A feast in the Church is not a mere commemoration of an historical fact: it is a renewal of grace in the hearts of the faithful accomplished chiefly through the instrumentality of the preacher. He voices the spirit of the Church, which is ever a creative force, a fresh breeze from a better land, invigorating hearts, and nerving them to labor faithfully and to persevere in the service of the Lord.

4. Before we succeed in inducing a man to do or give up something, we must enlist his sympathies and gently and gracefully win his heart. We must make ourselves agreeable to him, and not disagreeable or burdensome. To threaten with fire and brimstone, to use thunder and lightning, is to destroy; but the preacher's mission is to build up

Digitized by Google

with the soothing words of the merciful Master whose words breathe hope and forgiveness for the greatest sinner, and of whom Isaias said in advance: *Non contendet, neque clamabit, . . . arundinem quassatam non confringet, et linum fumigans non extinguet* (Matt. xii. 19, 20).

5. A good sermon should be as pleasant as a refreshing bath, especially in summer, when a "dip" into the blue ocean or a "plunge" into some limpid stream purifies and strengthens. But it must be short to produce an afterglow. A long sermon, however excellent in itself, will weaken and not strengthen. The ordinary Sunday sermon should last about twenty minutes and never exceed half an hour. The days of long sermons are gone, and, we sincerely hope, will never return. If a preacher be well prepared, twenty minutes will suffice him for doing good and solid work.

Persuasive.

1. When the mind is enlightened and the heart is aglow then the will is to be determined to action. Hence St. Thomas says: *Voluntas movet intellectum quoad executionem* (*Summa Theol.* i. 9, 84). The will is now to be moved to produce the practical results of preaching. And here the personality of the preacher is of the highest importance. He must be thoroughly in earnest and sincerely convinced of the truth he teaches. "It requires nothing great," Cardinal Newman maintains, "nothing heroic, nothing saintlike; it does but require conviction that the Catholic religion is given from God for the salvation of mankind, and that all other religions are but mockeries; it requires nothing more than faith, a single purpose, an honest heart, and a distinct utterance" (*Sermons to Mixed Congregations*).

2. To persuade others, the preacher must be persuaded himself. He must be full of holy zeal for God and for the salvation of souls: he must have unction. Cardinal Man-

Digitized by Google

ning, in lamenting the death of Father Thomas Burke, says: "We shall no more hear that eloquent voice—eloquent because so simple, for in all he spoke for God; he remembered God and forgot himself; it was the eloquence not of study or of self-manifestation, but of the great soul speaking with God and for God. The whole man spoke, and yet in the pathos and beauty and light of what he spoke we never remembered the speaker."

3. This earnest and unaffected zeal cannot be put on for the occasion like a neat and costly robe. Preaching is not acting, the pulpit is not the stage. People know and instinctively realize the difference between studied effort and words that come from a heart on fire. They know the voice of a true pastor from the hypocritical voice of a hireling; they feel at once "whether a man means what he says."

4. One of the surest means to move hearts is to love them. How true the classic saying of St. Augustine, *Ama et fac quod vis!* Love takes the heart captive. The language of love is understood by all, even by the rudest and most sinful; nothing resists its mysterious power. Moreover, the preacher who sincerely loves his people will easily find the right expressions. Love is inventive; a mother knows how to speak to her child in order to persuade it. *Nulla major est ad amorem invitatio quam amantem amore praevenire. Et nimis durus est animus, qui, si dilectionem nolebat impendere, nolit rependere* (St. Augustine, *De Catech. Rud.* c. iv.).

5. To move others, the preacher himself must be moved: *Si me vis flere, primum dolendum est tibi.* And as he is seeking the sanctification of the will, the emotions he wishes to arouse must needs be of a religious nature. Mere human feelings, morbid sentimentality, and revery are to be despised, as they lead to fanaticism, pietism, and the like, but not to a strong and vigorous life of faith and hope in God.

Digitized by Google

6. Courage and confidence in a preacher naturally betoken the truth of what he announces and produce conviction in his hearers. Cardinal Newman asks: "What is so powerful an incentive to preaching as the sure belief that he is preaching the truth?" (*Sermons to Mixed Congregations.*) The preacher should endeavor to realize his immense power as a preacher. Brownson justly claims that "the preacher's mission is the grandest on earth: he holds in his hands a power the proudest monarch might envy,—even the keys of heaven and hell. He has the sublimest and most soul-stirring truth that can be conceived. He may speak, if he will, with the power of truth itself, with the strength of the prayers of all the saints, the sympathies of all good men and angels, and with the omnipotence of God on his side" (*Complete Works*, vol. xx. 101).

7. Lack of courage and want of energy would exclude the quality of persuasiveness from any sermon. The preacher, therefore, must guard himself against a growing lukewarmness or tediousness, and beware of falling into a "habit" of preaching. Revive the faith within you whenever you are to preach: it is the faith which moves mountains,—it is the divine faith of Jesus Christ, the solid faith of the apostles, the fiery faith of martyrs, the strong faith of confessors, the pure faith of virgins. A poor, uncultivated, or small audience should never dampen the zealous efforts of the preacher; his office remains the same, and his sermon must be equally persuasive. Christ will give the reward in proportion to his zeal, and not according to the number of souls converted by his preaching.

Digitized by Google

§ 7.

How to Preach.

1. The preacher should always begin with a text from Sacred Scripture. The words of the Holy Spirit are his credentials; they give his sermons the seal of divine approbation. Our Lord when preaching in the synagogue used a text from Holy Writ (Luke iv. 16–21). The text should be the embryo of the sermon, and be announced in a clear and dignified manner as a message sent from on high (which it really is).

2. Distinctly state your proposition: say on what you intend to preach. Give the points or divisions of your sermon. It is an old-fashioned method which will keep you close to the subject and prevent you from generalizing or, to use a common expression, "from talking on general Christianity," while the people will be enabled to follow without difficulty and to remember what was said in the sermon.

3. Exordium and peroration should never be wanting in a sermon. The exordium of the sermon may be written only after the body of the sermon is finished. In this case the exordium proceeds *ex visceribus causae*, and is certain to be an effective introduction into the subject-matter. Let the conclusion be short, warm, and practical, reviewing and summarizing the main points of the discourse, giving a parting advice and a hearty blessing; use the old form: "A blessing I wish you all, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

4. It would be a serious mistake to neglect any of the natural means within our power of preaching effectively. The young preacher must strive to acquire a good delivery. His voice, his eyes, his gestures, his whole bearing must assist him in interpreting his ideas and feelings.

Digitized by Google

5. There is a power in the human voice which is beyond all explanation. Whole printed volumes could not tell what one single sentence, nay, what one living, spoken word, announces.* The preacher should know his voice, its strength and its weakness, before he can use it to advantage. Euphony, strength, flexibility, and persistence are qualities regarded as essential to a good voice. An ordinary voice may be made agreeable and even sympathetic by patient and constant exercise. Reading aloud is an excellent way of cultivating the voice. We know to what perfection a musician can attain in the use of a musical instrument. We had heard the same instrument played by others, but never realized its powerful spell. But what is all the music of mechanical instruments compared to the power and sweetness of a well trained and modulated voice? The preacher's voice should be the instrument of a pure and noble soul. His heart is undoubtedly the sounding-board of the voice which clearly betrays the former, as Quintilian teaches: *Est enim (vox) mentis index ac totidem, quot illa, mutationes habet* (l. c., xi. 3). A baritone voice is regarded as generally the most useful. Let the preacher take a pitch which is neither too high nor too low, and be careful that his enunciation be neither too slow nor too rapid, but rather let it be earnest and dignified. It is doubtful if the study of elocution is of substantial help to the preacher's voice; it may easily destroy its naturalness. Father Tom Burke is quoted as thanking God that he never took a single lesson in elocution.

* "The inner man speaks through the voice. When, after many years, age and cares have changed the features and bent the form of the friend of our youth, we recognize him by his voice. God has placed a wonderful charm in the human voice; it may speak to us with the allurement of a siren or the calling of an angel. The children of the world are aware of this; temptation has often entered the soul by the sweet sound of a voice. May our voice be an instrument for saving souls, an organ of salvation through which we manifest our rational human nature" (Dr. Hettinger's *Aphorismen*, p. 400).

Digitized by Google

6. We find it difficult to lay down general rules for what is called action in oratory. Generally speaking, action must be free from all affectation.

> "Therefore, avaunt! all attitude and stare
> And start theatric, practised at the glass.
> I seek divine simplicity in him
> Who handles things divine."—COWPER.

Action, however, should be dignified and graceful, without interfering in the least with the individuality of the preacher. What is becoming in one may look exceedingly awkward in another. Destroying his individuality would mean the loss of the characteristics of the preacher. Let him seek to be simple, such as Cowper paints him:

> "I would express him simple, grave, sincere;
> In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
> And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
> And natural in gesture; much impressed
> Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
> And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
> May feel it too; affectionate in look
> And tender in address, as well becomes
> A messenger of grace to guilty man."

7. Cardinal Newman sketches the ideal preacher when he says of St. John Chrysostom: "We shall be very wrong if we suppose that fine expressions or rounded periods or figures of speech were the credentials by which he claimed to be the first doctor of the East. His oratorical power was but the instrument by which he readily, gracefully, adequately, expressed—expressed without effort and with felicity—the keen feelings, the living ideas, the earnest, practical lessons which he had to communicate to his hearers. He spoke because his heart, his head, were brimful of things to speak about. His elocution corresponded to that strength and flexibility of limb, that quickness of the eye, hand, and foot, by which a man excels in manly games or mechanical skill. It would be a great mistake,

Digitized by Google

in speaking of it, to ask whether it was Attic or Asiatic, terse or flowing, when its distinctive praise was that it was natural. His unrivalled charm, as that of every eloquent man, lies in his singleness of purpose, his fixed grasp of his aim, his noble earnestness." In this beautiful paragraph we find the various ingredients that make up the perfect preacher. His whole outward bearing should be natural, humble, and modest. A certain shyness or timidity is not to be rejected; it should be even desired in a young preacher rather than an overconfidence, an eagerness to preach and to appear eloquent. These latter qualities generally evidence a head which is empty and a heart which is lacking the touch of Heaven. Great preachers always dread the hour of preaching, and are nervous and ill at ease until after the sermon.

8. A man is always eloquent on what he knows thoroughly and what he has thought and felt himself. Therefore know your sermon well before you preach it. If you do not know it by heart as you have written it, you should at least have the whole matter in your head. A young preacher, however, should commit his sermons to memory *verbatim* for a number of years before he attempts to preach without memorizing.

9. We shall always preach a good sermon if our mind and heart be full of our subject, if we can forget ourselves entirely, and only think of Him in whose name we are speaking. Mistakes in grammar, pronunciation, and gestures are easily overlooked if the preacher be a man of God and fully conscious of his sublime mission. Brownson tells us that the sermon that affected him more and provoked more rigid self-examination than almost any other to which he had ever listened was one on "The Sign of the Cross," preached by a man who mispronounced almost every other word, and had hardly a sentence of correct English from beginning to end. And he goes on to say that "the most

Digitized by Google

effective preachers are not your most learned and accomplished pulpit orators who never transgress a single propriety or deviate from a single conventional rule, but the meek and humble-minded, who think only of Christ and Him crucified" (*Complete Works*, vol. xx. p. 202).

10. But it must not be inferred that a preacher is dispensed from the duty of perfecting himself with regard to those things which are usually deemed externals in preaching. He is bound to avoid everything that mars the beauty of the divine message. As on the altar, so in the pulpit, the priest's outward bearing should be faultless. "Virtue," Egan says, "loses half its charm when it ignores good manners" (*A Gentleman*, p. 21). The preacher should be a perfect man, a living edification for everybody. He cannot be indifferent to his dress, his hair, his carriage, and manners. Even the poor and uncultivated expect good manners in one whose rule of life and constant preaching is the charity of Christ. The whole man must preach: his head erect, his face mirroring a soul which glows with divine love, his eyes beaming with truth and charity, his hands now moving to plead, help, avert, reject; now folded in fervent supplication, now opened to offer peace and forgiveness, now pointing to heaven above or to hell below. Thus he will use the God-given faculties of soul and body in announcing effectively the divine word.

11. He must avoid everything which is rude, uncouth, or ungentlemanly. Every flaw would be noticeable in his priestly character. While despising everything "dudish" or foppish, he must avoid the following defects in manner and voice, which are positively offensive in every preacher: closing the eyes or hands constantly, swinging the body, jumping, leaning forward or backward, stammering, lisping, speaking through the teeth or the nose, yelling at the top of the voice, whispering, hammering the pulpit, stamping the

Digitized by Google

feet, spitting, blowing the nose like a fog-horn, coughing without the handkerchief.

§ 8.

Where to Preach.

1. In every Catholic church, even in country places, in small mission churches, there should be a pulpit from which the *sacerdos sacra docens* proclaims the truth which alone makes man free and happy. The priest, if at all possible, should not preach from the altar or standing on the altar steps or near the sanctuary railing, but from the pulpit. This certainly adds to the dignity of preaching in the popular mind.

2. According to apostolic custom, the sermon on Sunday morning is delivered during Mass, after the gospel, and not before nor after Mass, neither after holy communion. The bishop, however, may grant (*ex causa rationabili*) permission to preach after holy communion. The sermon should serve to prepare the people for a worthy and fruitful assistance at the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

3. After a short, but fervent prayer at the foot of the altar * he goes to the pulpit, as Lohner directs, *modeste et graviter procedens neque facile hinc inde circumspiciens* (*Biblioth.* v.). He should not for a moment allow his

* "The last preparation is to kneel before our divine Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and to make the sign of the cross upon our lips in honor of the sacred mouth which spake as never any man spoke: offering to Him our confusion, if He be pleased to humble us by failure; and praying Him to work His own will by His own word, even though in our mouth. 'He that heareth you heareth Me' gives us a share in the promise made in prophecy to Himself. 'My Spirit is in thee, and My words that I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and forever'" (Cardinal Manning's *Eternal Priesthood*, p. 188).

Digitized by Google

eyes to wander over the people, nor should he make any remarks to any one, not even to altar-boys, but those beautiful words should now form his aspiration: *Dominus sit in corde meo et in labiis meis: ut digne et competenter annuntiem Evangelium suum.*

4. Arrived at the pulpit, he faces the people and waits until perfect silence prevails. After having made the necessary announcements and proclamations, he invites the people to rise and to hear the gospel of the day, for instance, on Easter Sunday, taken from the Gospel of Our Lord according to St. Mark, chapter the sixteenth, beginning with the first and ending with the seventh verse. He pauses a little and then reads the word of God *solemniter et distincte*, aware of the awful sanctity of every word; at the close of the reading he devoutly kisses the Sacred Text, lays aside the book, and, surveying his audience, waits until perfect quiet is restored, when *alta voce* he makes the sign of the cross and *junctis manibus et oculis submissis* announces his text, indicating chapter and verse. He now properly commences by addressing the people with "dear brethren," "my dear friends," according to his pastoral relations with them. After the exordium he puts on his cap, which he wears until the peroration. All noise, especially hammering, in, under, or around the church should be, if at all possible, prevented; and no collection should be taken while the priest is speaking.

5. It is a part of pastoral duty to provide for the bodily comfort of the faithful during a sermon. The church should be well heated in winter and always well ventilated. If the priest can bear the cold, it may be because he is strong and more accustomed or trained to it, but the majority of the people are not able to bear much cold. If sanitary arrangements and precautions are overlooked, diseases may be carried home from church and the priest be blamed for them. All should be accommodated

Digitized by Google

with sittings for ordinary occasions, and nobody be obliged to stand. The great St. Augustine, who lived many centuries before the days of "American comfort" dawned, and who was personally a most mortified man, believed in a sufficient supply of seats for everybody during the sermon, *ne quisquam infirmior stando lassatus a saluberrima intentione avertatur, aut etiam cogatur abscedere* (*De Catech. Rud.* xiii. 19).

Digitized by Google

PART II.

CATECHISING.

§ 9.

Importance of the Catechetical Office.

Sinite parvulos venire ad me
(Mark x. 14).

1. A good preacher is a great blessing and a source of joy to a congregation; but a priest who catechises well, who regards it as his most important missionary duty to instruct little children and to feed them with the elements of Christian doctrine, is even preferable to a master in sacred eloquence. For the priest himself it is a most pleasant task, fraught with peace and consolation, to bring the little ones to their blessed Master. The children are the priest's *germen pium, examen novellum, flos honoris et fructus laboris, gaudium et corona* (St. Aug. in lect. v., Dom. in Alb.).

2. Catechising is an ecclesiastical function; its theory is a part of practical (pastoral) theology. Its study is of incalculable importance, especially to the priest in America, where, as we have stated, a great ignorance about religious matters prevails among adults, and where so many parents are unable to teach their children even the rudiments of our holy religion.* Wherefore the Third Council of Bal-

* "Many parents finding themselves here in a strange country, poor, disappointed in their expectations, or corrupted through evil example,

Digitized by Google

timore devotes a special chapter to the teaching of catechism, in which it clearly marks out the duty of the priest: *Ad rectores animarum spectat per seipsos pascere gregis sui agnos. Patris nomine prorsus indignus foret ille, qui filio fame pereunti panem frangere inique recusaret* (n. 217).

3. The Council of Trent (sess. xxiv. c. 4) obliges bishops to see that pastors teach the catechism to children at least every Sunday and holyday, and to punish severely those who neglect their duty. It is also positively forbidden to grant a vacation to catechism classes; and Benedict XIV. contends that if only one child should come for catechism it should be given. Is not the soul of a single child worth laboring for with zeal?

4. The thought that the children are the most precious portion of his flock will stimulate the good priest to use every effort to make the teaching of catechism the important work of his ministry. Through the children he will effect the conversion and sanctification of others. More impressionable and more susceptible of truth and more grateful for it than adults generally are, the children are frequently the best preachers in the family circles. They are sometimes the only hope of the parish.* When their

fall into habits of intemperance, and are unable to exert any but a bad influence on their children. Others would do their duty, but, never themselves having received a good home education, do not know how to do it; and with the best dispositions in the world, do, by their over-indulgence or over-severity, or by both combined, more to alienate their children, in a country like ours, from their religion than to attach them to it" (Brownson, *Complete Works*, vol. xx., p. 32).

* "The priest," Bishop Moriarty maintains, "who would neglect every other instruction, and teach the catechism to the children of his parish, would have done a great deal. The priest who would discharge every other duty and neglect this would have done nothing. The one will prepare for his successor a generation, at least, of believing Christians; the other, a generation of baptized pagans." Again he says: "Place a well-catechised Christian in the backwoods of America, or in the frozen regions of the North, and without the sacraments or sacrifice

Digitized by Google

parents have lost the faith or grown lukewarm and neglectful in the practice of it, how often has not the innocent prattle of a child about God and the Blessed Virgin moved the heart of a wayward father or a careless mother! In the hands of the priest the children are as pliable as wax; he can mould them at will and fashion their young souls, and produce blossoms that will bring a rich and luscious fruit.

5. The sublime example of our divine Lord should sufficiently convince us of the importance of instructing children. Nowhere does He appear so touchingly beautiful, so sweet and tender, as when He fondles and blesses the little ones (cf. St. Luke xviii. 15–17; Mark x. 13–16; Matt. xix. 13–15). He tells us: *Qui susceperit unum parvulum talem in nomine meo, me suscipit;* but He utters the dreadful punishment: *Qui autem scandalizaverit unum de pusillis istis qui in me credunt, expedit ei ut suspendatur mola asinaria in collo ejus, et demergatur in profundum maris* (Matt. xviii. 5, 6). He invites us to learn from them, and to imitate them in their simplicity and sincerity if we desire to enter heaven; and He warns against disrespect to children: *Videte ne contemnatis unum ex his pusillis: dico enim vobis quia angeli eorum in coelis semper vident faciem Patris mei qui in coelis est* (l. c. 10). Meditating on these words of the blessed Master, on His particular love towards children, the great Chancellor Gerson exclaims in words which should ever be in the heart of the catechist: *O piissime Jesu, quis ultra post te verecundabitur esse humilis ad parvulos? Quis tumescens et elatus de sua vel magnitudine vel scientia parvitatem deinceps parvulorum, ignorantiam vel imbe-*

or any of the external helps of religion, he can save his soul. Place a man in the very capital of Christianity, let him live in the very house of God . . . without a knowledge of the Christian doctrine everything else that religion offers will be useless" (*Allocutions*, pp. 12 and 110).

Digitized by Google

cillitatem audebit aspernari, quando tu, qui es Deus benedictus in saecula, in quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae Dei absconditi, usque ad castissimos parvulorum amplexus beata brachia mansuetus inclinas atque circumligas (*De parvulis ad Christum trahendis*, c. iv.).

6. Following the divine Model, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church have regarded the teaching of catechism as a most important priestly duty, which they would not leave to others to perform. We mention especially St. Cyril, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Clement, Origen, St. Augustine, St. Thomas of Aquin. Among the learned and saints of modern times who were eminent catechists figure the illustrious names of Vincent Ferrer, Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, Canisius, Fénélon, Francis de Sales, Vincent de Paul, Alphonsus. The words of St. Jerome, in his letter to Laeta, find an echo in the hearts of all zealous priests in every succeeding century: *Gestabo* (*scilicet, filiam Laetae*) *humeris, et balbutientia senex verba formabo, multo gloriosior mundi philosopho, qui non regem Macedonum Babylonico periturum veneno, sed ancillam et sponsam Christi erudiam, regnis coelestibus offerendam.*

§ 10.

The Catechist.

1. The priest is the duly authorized catechist, yet others may be permitted by the bishop to assist the priest in teaching catechism. This office, as the Angelic Doctor teaches, belongs *principally* to the priest: *Secunda est instructio, qua quis eruditur de fidei rudimentis, et qualiter se debeat habere in susceptione sacramentorum, et haec pertinet secundario quidem ad ministros, principaliter autem ad sacerdotes* (S. Theol. III. qu. 71, a. 4, ad 3). The priest is not allowed to leave the entire charge of teach-

Digitized by Google

ing catechism to Catholic teachers, be they even Brothers or Sisters, as the Third Baltimore Council indicates: *Praeceptores sacerdotali charactere non insigniti, sive religiosi sive laici, magno equidem sunt adjumento in juvenum institutione, at munus verbi Dei docendi sibi proprium non habent. (Labia enim sacerdotis custodient scientiam, et legem requirent ex ore ejus.)* (l. c.)

2. Erudition qualifies for teaching and instructing, but piety is necessary to make others pious and holy. Only a good man can look into the innocent eyes of children with confidence, and enkindle in their young hearts the fire of God's love. The general requisites of a catechist are: *authority*, founded on an irreproachable life; *knowledge*, drawn from holy sources; *zeal*, fed on prayer and meditation. He must, moreover, strive to acquire special virtues which will render his catechetical office really useful and effective.

3. A supernatural love for children is especially needed in the catechist. The children he instructs are his own; they belong to him as the representative of the Church which claims them by the title of spiritual birth in Baptism. Love them sincerely, avoiding, however, all familiarity, which breeds contempt and destroys real love; for true love is based on respect and reverence for the beloved. Your eyes of faith should see the bright spirits (who are constantly gazing on the face of the heavenly Father) standing by their side. After the love of God, let a deep affection for the children be the motive of your catechetical labors. *Hac ergo dilectione tibi tamquam fine proposito, quo referas omnia, quae dicis, quidquid narras ita narra, ut ille cui loqueris audiendo credat, credendo speret, sperando amet* (St. Aug., *De Cat. Rud.* c. 4, n. 8).

4. Patience is required to cope with the many and never-ending difficulties which the mind and heart of the child offer the catechist. The intellect of the child may

Digitized by Google

often appear dull when it is really susceptible of instruction. What experienced catechist has not been surprised at times at the way in which children grasped a religious truth with a clearness of understanding that is often wanting to adults! The answers which children give in catechism and the questions they sometimes put recall the divine words of the Master: *Revelasti ea parvulis . . . abscondisti sapientibus.* Whilst levity and want of attention must be checked, the catechist has to be careful not to discourage a timid and diffident child whose intellectual powers might be paralyzed and stupefied by a harsh and overbearing manner in the instructor. The will of the child, rebellious in consequence of original sin, has to be curbed. Some of the little ones are the children of drunkards or blasphemers or even of infidels; they live in an atmosphere of sin and vice, and it is next to a miracle that they are not worse. They harbor no malice in their young hearts, and their bright though cunning faces seem to plead with you in the words of the Gospel steward: *Patientiam habe et omnia reddam tibi.* Yes, have patience, and you will change them into good boys and girls who will grow up to be earnest Catholic men and women, and will repay all your patient labor with grateful prayers and Christian conduct. Never use corporal punishment; it is unbecoming a priest. If you have to punish (for lying, stealing, cursing, immodest words, quarrelling, irreverence in church), do not punish in anger, but let them feel that you are obliged to punish, otherwise the young culprit will say: "*I* was punished because *he* was angry or in bad humor." We certainly disavow the punishing of an unruly child by making him kneel on the floor, in the aisle, or before the altar. The child should kneel only when praying to God.

5. Cheerfulness is another special qualification essential to a good catechist. St. Augustine, in his book, *De Cat.*

Digitized by Google

Rud., devotes five chapters to this quality, and looks upon it as indispensable: *Quibus modis faciendum sit, ut gaudens catechizet* (*tanto enim suavior erit, quanto magis id potuerit*), *ea cura maxima est.* Cheerfulness puts life and joy into the work of the catechist and makes it easy for himself and the children by banishing all tediousness. *Si usitata et parvulis congruentia saepe repetere fastidimus—copulatis cordi eorum etiam nobis nova videbuntur* (St. Aug. l. c., cap. xii.). A frequent consideration of the great and rich harvest to be reaped from catechising will add fuel to a cheerful disposition, as the same Doctor says: *Accedit ad comparandam laetitiam quod cogitamus et consideramus, de qua erroris morte in vitam fidei transeat homo* (l. c.).

§ 11.

Manner of Teaching Catechism.

1. We would advise young priests to teach catechism synthetically, and not to use the analytical form: not making the children first learn the lesson (text) *verbatim* and then explaining, but first explaining it and then looking for answers. The analytical method seems to be a torture for children, and against the apostolical principle, *fides ex auditu*; it is exegesis, not catechetical instruction, dissecting sentences, examining the meaning of words. In the synthetical method the catechist first gives an instruction on the lesson adapted to the capacity of the children, with the necessary explanations and suitable illustrations. At the close of his instruction the questions and answers of the catechism are read, and the children are requested to commit the answers to memory word for word. Consequently the lesson should be short.

Digitized by Google

2. In his explanation the catechist must attend not only to the enlightenment of the mind, but he should also continually draw practical lessons from every doctrine, and thus sanctify the young hearts by inspiring them with the fear of God and the love of virtue. *Dogma* and *moral* must go hand in hand in educating the mind and heart of the child. Avoid too much explaining and defining and proving. For children the priestly authority supplies reasoning. They believe because the priest says so; he is the representative of God, and, in their opinion, he cannot tell anything wrong.

3. Speak in a clear, concise, animated style, using child-like, not childish, expressions. Therefore you must watch the children and observe their ways of expressing themselves when you meet them on the street or at their homes, and converse with them in a fatherly manner. Father Lambing gives very practical hints in his *Sunday-School Teacher's Manual.* He says: "The teacher's language should, to be perfect, combine the simplicity of the child with the accuracy of the finished scholar. It should be his constant study to simplify his language as far as possible, never employing a word the meaning of which is not familiar to the least-talented member of the class. Let him observe what sort of words they use in their intercourse with one another and in their answers in class, and follow their example. Saxon instead of foreign words should be used, and short rather than long ones. But all long words are not for that reason to be regarded as difficult. The only rule that can be given on this important point is: *Study to make yourself perfectly understood by all.* No useless or irrelevant questions should be asked—questions that do not bear upon the lesson, and those that relate to matters with which the children are known to be already familiar. Questions that are evidently beyond the ability of the children are equally out of place. Never ask a question with a direct view of

Digitized by Google

puzzling the children. Never laugh at an answer, or make light of it, or show disappointment on hearing it, nor permit others to do so. On the contrary, it should be the aim of the teacher to encourage the children to speak out freely. With a little dexterity he can correct faulty answers, without even commenting on them. Care should be taken not to ask too difficult a question in the beginning. The best manner of putting a question is for a teacher to ask it before naming the child who is expected to answer, and then to point out the one who is required to speak."

4. Divine revelation was not given in a doctrinal but in a historical form; hence Bible history should be the basis of catechetical teaching. St. Augustine furnishes a typical example of a good catechetical lesson in his book *De Cat. Rudibus*. The feasts of the ecclesiastical year also furnish matter for illustrations on an historical basis. Church history is another field in which to find rich and varied matter for making catechetical instruction interesting to children. Moreover, religious anecdotes and short stories may be employed to advantage. *The Furniss Tracts*, the works of Dr. Schmitt, Miss Ella McMahon, Father Power, and Spirago-Clarke, present a mine of pleasant and instructive stories.

5. Above all, endeavor to be simple; for simplicity must be the primary rule in teaching catechism. It requires a great amount of study, prayer, and observation. You must prepare for every class of catechism so as to teach in a spirit of simplicity; you must be a child among children, and forget everything about yourself, and never appear before your children with a cloud over your countenance. The little ones are impatient for your friendly, yea, fatherly, look and your loving words. How well the genius of St. Augustine illustrates this idea! *Suavius est matri minuta mansa inspuere filio, quam ipsam mandere et devorare grandiosa. Non ergo recedat de pectore etiam cogitatio gallinae illius, quae languidulis plumis teneros*

Digitized by Google

foetus operit, et susurrantes pullos confracta voce advocat, cujus blandas alas refugientes superbi praeda fiunt alitibus.

6. The catechist should continually command the attention of the children. The eye is the chief instrument in attracting attention. Therefore have your eyes constantly on the children, and do not walk about whilst you are speaking to them. With his voice he holds the attention of his young hearers. As a rule, he must speak slowly, and in a mild tone of voice, neither too high nor too low. Shouting distracts, whispering irritates, but a gentle voice, the echo of a loving heart, hypnotizes. The expression of his countenance should harmonize with the tone of his voice: for instance, when speaking of the presence of God, he should look reverent and solemn; when speaking of hell, he should look alarmed and distressed. Remind the children frequently of God's presence; often speak to God for them.

7. Keep good order in the catechism class, first of all, by keeping yourself in order. Know the text yourself; learn it by heart. Assign beforehand the lesson the children have to learn, and do not forget what lesson you have assigned. If you are exact, the children will be exact. Let every child have its own place; but do not put the light-headed together: arrange them alphabetically. Often praise, never scold, seldom rebuke. Occasionally give a pious picture or a blessed medal as a reward for good answers or to encourage a timid and deserving child. But be sparing and prudent with your premiums, to avoid jealousy, friction, and discouragement. See that they come in time. Let the boys enter first, if the children are waiting for the opening of the door. Never allow talking, but keep them in perfect silence during the whole class. No child should remain after class, except for punishment; we seriously doubt if such a punishment produces any good.

Digitized by Google

§ 12.

Catechism in School and in Church.

1. A SCHOOL taught and supported by Catholics does not deserve the name of a Catholic parochial school unless it is regularly visited by the priest for catechetical instruction. The charge of teaching catechism in school cannot be left to the teachers, though they be members of a religious community. They may attend to the recitation of the catechism or Bible history, but the priest must supervise all; he is the only *official* teacher of catechism. No person, except one who has studied theology, is capable of teaching religion, of imparting catechetical instruction.

2. Begin with the smallest children, and do not wait until they can read and study the catechism. Teach them how to make the sign of the cross, how to say the principal Catholic prayers correctly and distinctly. Open their young hearts (which are naturally religious) to the love and reverence for the great Father in heaven. Show them how He hears their prayers, because He is ever near them. Speak to them of the boundless love of God's eternal Son by pointing to the crucifix and to the wounds on hands and feet and side. Tell them of His blessed Mother, who is also their Mother. Remind them of the holy angels that follow them everywhere. A few good pious pictures—if possible, colored—will suggest plenty of object-lessons that will sink deeply into their souls.

3. In the second and third school year the principal truths of religion should be taught in connection with Bible history. Let it be a historical religious instruction. Commence with the small edition of Schuster's well-illustrated *Bible History*, and after three months introduce the catechism which is prescribed by diocesan statute. Bible

Digitized by Google

history must remain the principal object of religion. In the fourth and fifth year the regular catechism class should be given in the synthetic form. The catechist must use his utmost care, even with the smallest children, that they receive a correct impression of the truth. The language in which catechism is to be taught, whether in English, German, French, etc., depends on the child and not on the will of the catechist; the welfare of the child should decide this question.

4. See that the children attend the daily Mass, if at all possible. Assemble them in school, and from there make them come to church in rank and file. In entering they take holy water and genuflect. They go to their proper places, where they remain in silence the whole time. Have them under the supervision of religious or some trustworthy persons, but do not keep them on their knees constantly. Assign them comfortable seats, and place them in full view of the altar so that they can watch the priest. Tell them what the ringing of the bell signifies, and the moving of the book. The grown people, and especially the servers at the altar and the sexton, should set the children an example of good behavior in church. Teach them how to assist with interior devotion. St. Thomas gives three methods of assisting at Mass: mere pious assistance, with the intention of honoring God; paying attention to the meaning of the principal parts at least; meditating on the mysteries of the holy sacrifice in connection with the Passion. The age of the child will determine the method to be chosen. The educational effect of the daily Mass on the mind and heart of the child is simply wonderful.

5. Teach the children how to spend the day in a Christian manner; to bless themselves when awaking; to dress themselves modestly; to take holy water and then to kneel down, and to recite a few prayers, especially the Our

Digitized by Google

Father and the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed, the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity; to offer up all their words, thoughts, and deeds of the day to the greater glory of God, and to unite them with the sufferings and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ; to pray before and after meals; to make frequent aspirations during the day (for example, "Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on me," "Immaculate heart of Mary, pray for me," "My holy angel, protect me"); to invoke the holy names of Jesus and Mary and Joseph in temptations; to examine their conscience at night and to make an act of perfect contrition; to sprinkle their bed with holy water, and to think of God and our blessed Mother before falling asleep. Thus the children will be taught how to use the means that God has given us to lead a virtuous life and to attain the end for which He has placed us in this world.

6. If children do not attend a Catholic school, because there is none, or for some other solid reason, it will be necessary to organize a catechism class for week-days. If possible, bring them together twice in the week—in the afternoon after their school session. On Saturday they are generally free the entire day; they may easily come in the forenoon or early in the afternoon. Make the class as attractive as possible, so that they love to come to it. Public-school teachers are generally kind and amiable to the children, and strive to make everything pleasant and inviting for them. The priest should outdo them in kindness and real charity. If some of the children fail to come, then be sure and go after them, like a true shepherd who looks after the stray sheep. Parents feel highly pleased and honored when they notice the interest the priest takes in their children. Remember likewise the efforts which Protestants, especially the so-called women missionaries, are making in proselytizing Catholic children, offering all kinds of attractions to entice the juvenile heart,—

Digitized by Google

music, suppers, entertainments, Christmas-trees, new clothes. Therefore make everything cheerful during the catechetical instruction; tell stories, especially from the lives of the saints; show them large prints of the Old and the New Testament; make an occasional excursion with them; in short, let them know that they have grown into your priestly heart and that you are truly fond of them, and love will be returned for love.

7. The present system of holding Sunday-school, as it is in vogue in most of the dioceses of the United States, consists in assembling the children at a certain hour on Sunday in church, where they are taught by the Sunday-school teachers. The boys and girls, generally from the age of six to sixteen, are divided into sections (prayer, catechism, perseverance classes). We doubt if this system accomplishes much. However, where it does exist the priest must try to make it comparatively effective. He should always be present, open and close the session with prayer. The teachers may not be of very great assistance, but they help in keeping order and in hearing the lessons; they should not be permitted to go any further, by changing the places of children, punishing them, and so forth. Sisters are of more substantial help; all the lady teachers should be appointed by them. The real catechetical instruction must be given by the priest before the close of Sunday-school, and should occupy fifteen minutes. As a rule, the Sunday-school teachers are the best young men and women of the congregation. Give them special instructions on a week-evening and form them into a Christian-doctrine society, thus still more attaching them to the Church by making them more intelligent.

8. Do not keep the children after Mass for catechism class. They may remain for a short time (fifteen minutes) to have a sodality meeting or to say a few prayers, but not to recite lessons in catechism, except on the mis-

Digitized by Google

sion, where the priest cannot stay for the afternoon. Have a library for the children, and see that they make good use of it. Appoint somebody to sell Catholic Sunday-school papers that are well illustrated; the children will bring good reading-matter into their homes. If you have a basement, hold the Sunday-school in it, and not before the Blessed Sacrament.

9. Another way of holding Sunday-school which appears more Catholic and more practical would be to gather all the children of the congregation (from the age of seven until, at least, two years after their First Holy Communion) in church half an hour before afternoon service begins. All the grown people are invited to assist.* The priest first puts a few questions to three or four children about the matter he treated on the previous Sunday afternoon; he then gives his catechetical instruction, from which adults as well as children may profit. All remain for divine service.

§ 13.

First-Communion Class.

1. Rev. H. J. Heuser, in an instructive article on "Children's First Communion" in the *American Ecclesiastical Review* (December, 1895), says: "The student of pastoral theology has few things to learn which are of more importance to the welfare of souls and the growth and prosperous condition of the Church than the practice which is to be observed in preparing children for their First Communion. That practice is rightly considered the hinge and pivot upon which the entire pastoral work turns." In the springtime of Christian life there is one day that should outshine all other days with its brightness and

* "How beautiful it would be," exclaims Bishop Moriarty, "to see the fathers and the mothers leading their children by the hand to the Sunday catechism, remaining to listen, learning in age the meaning of what in youth they did not fully understand or reviving the memory of much that they forgot!"

Digitized by Google

beauty—the day of First Communion. Napoleon I., who "trod the ways of glory and sounded all the depths and shoals of honor," at the end of his career declared the day of his First Communion to have been the happiest of his entire life. When Jesus, the children's Friend, the Son of God and of Mary, makes His first entrance into the young heart, then all is sunshine and radiant happiness. His divine presence fills the soul with peace and joy never experienced before, and impresses on it the marks of an infinite love and condescension.

O, res mirabilis, manducat Dominum
Pauper, servus, et humilis.

2. The priest should make his greatest effort to bring about the realization of hopes which the Church entertains for the young Catholic by the worthy reception of his First Communion and to prepare him for the wonderful things that the Emmanuel desires to effect by His first coming. It is sad to meet occasionally Catholics in America who have not the faintest recollection of their First Communion. In such cases may we be wrong in blaming the priest for not making a more lasting impression by a more thorough preparation for the solemn act? On the other hand, in many instances the remembrance of that happy day has been the last spark of hope in the heart of the sinner that encouraged him to say with the prodigal son: *Surgam, et ibo ad patrem meum* (Luke xv. 18).

3. For the priest himself, this work of preparing children for First Communion is one of the most consoling and even most sublime cares of his pastoral life. His own heart grows tender when he stands before the children who are eager to hear of Christ's love for them, and to purify their hearts and adorn them for the advent of the heavenly Guest. Perhaps he has grown somewhat lukewarm of late in the service of his Master; his manifold occupations have

Digitized by Google

marred the tranquillity of his heart. He now looks into the promising hearts of his dear children and notices their growing fervor and their anxiety to please God, and their holy example stimulates him to rouse the faith within himself and to let the buds of hope again unfold their leaves of holy fervor and the strength of youth nerve his soul to new deeds of zeal and charity. He feels, moreover, that now he is engaged in a work most pleasing to the Master—a work which will outlive him and perhaps counterbalance his own negligences and shortcomings. Yes, his work of preparation for First Communion will endure: *Adolescens juxta viam suam; etiam cum senuerit, non recedet ab ea* (Prov. xxii. 6).

4. The general law of the Church obliges all who have come to the age of reason to receive Holy Communion. The decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments, in the year 1910, concerning the age of the First Holy Communion of children, says: "The age of discretion required both for Confession and Communion is the time when the child *begins to reason.*" In regard to the amount of knowledge necessary, it states: "The knowledge of Christian doctrine required in children in order to be properly prepared for First Holy Communion is (1) that they understand *according to their capacity* those mysteries of Faith which are necessary as a means of salvation; (2) that they be able to distinguish the Eucharist from common and material bread; and (3) also approach the Sacred Table with the *devotion becoming their age.* The Code of Canon Law says on the same subject (Canon 854): "The Holy Eucharist should not be administered to children who on account of their tender age have not yet an understanding of this Sacrament or a desire for it. But in danger of death, as Holy Communion can and ought to be administered to children, it is sufficient that they be able to discern the Body of Christ from common food, and reverently adore it. Aside

Digitized by Google

from the danger of death, however, a fuller knowledge of Christian doctrine and a more careful preparation should be exacted, so that they at least know according to their capacity the mysteries necessary for salvation, and approach the Holy Eucharist with becoming devotion. The judgment as to sufficient dispositions for First Communion belongs to the confessor and the parents or guardians of the children. It is the pastor's duty to exercise care, even by examinations, if he judges it prudent, lest children approach the Sacred Table before reaching the use of reason or without proper dispositions. He should likewise see that when they have attained the use of reason and are sufficiently disposed they are strengthened as soon as possible with this Divine Food." The above Decree of the Sacred Congregation and the Canon of the new Code lay down the same conditions in different terms. With the beginning of the use of reason the appreciation or taste of Divine things develops. This knowledge is in a sense keener than the acquired science of the adults, since it is free from the malice which darkens the intellect as man grows in sin. Hence our Lord could say: "Out of the mouths of babes thou hast perfected praise." To elicit from the child the expression of a desire does not mean that it is necessary to wait until the child asks to go to Holy Communion. We are no longer at liberty to let children wait until their ninth or tenth year before admitting them to Holy Communion. It is true, there are compensating reasons for delays as under the old policy, and there are dangers in admitting children with insufficient preparation where the surroundings are apt to make such insufficiency a basis for habitual irreverence. The confessor, the pastor or teacher, however, is supposed to apply the wisdom of experience to the interpretation of the general law for the children with whom he has to deal.

5. The best remote preparation is a thoroughly Christian home and a real Catholic-school education. Without these factors, the child is lacking a solid foundation for a full

Digitized by Google

development of his higher faculties. Such a child is to be pitied, and the priest who is to prepare him for the sublime moment must ask God for special courage and patience. The immediate preparation should not occupy more than two months, and, according to the Third Council of Baltimore, not less than six weeks: *Saltem per sex hebdomadas et ter in unaquaque hebdomada* (*saltem in loco ubi resident vel ad quem facilius accedere possunt*) *catechismum doceant* (n. 218). But for a whole year the priest should have his eyes on the First Communicants, and though the time of actual preparation be short and concentrated, yet he should bestow special care on them, single them out, and assign them special places in church during the preceding ten months.

6. When the time appointed for First-Communion class has arrived, make a solemn announcement of it in church, and impress parents and guardians with the importance of this class and the necessity of a prompt and constant attendance on the part of the children, stating distinctly that "without human respect" you will put back any child that is not sufficiently prepared for the great sacrament, thus carrying out the decree of the Second Baltimore Council: *Erudiant eos peculiari studio, inquirant diligenter in eorum vitam, et quos in Christianae doctrinae rudimentis jam satis instructos esse, ac morum probitate ac pietate commendari intellexerint, ad sacram mensam admittant, caeteros in aliud tempus, omni humano respectu posthabito, remittentes* (n. 260). Have the hour of instruction convenient for the children. Some, perhaps, are working and cannot come during the day; let them come in the evening. If you know of any who fail to come at all or who show no willingness to come, go after them and kindly ask and coax them—yes, compel them to come: *Exi in vias, et sepes: et compelle intrare* (Luke xiv. 23).

7. The subject-matter for First-Communion class is a

Digitized by Google

short recapitulation of the history of the Redemption, a review of the ten commandments and those of the Church, followed by two well-prepared instructions on grace and the sacraments in general. Insist much on the value of the sacraments. *Per sacramenta*, the Council of Trent says, *omnis justitia incipit, coepta augetur vel amissa reparatur*. For the rest, dwell on the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. Your manner during the instruction must be more solemn and serious than usual, showing, however, a holy affection for them whilst they are approaching so near to Our Lord. Mere reciting of catechism would be an intellectual exercise which would injure rather than nourish their reverence for holy things. Let the class be one instructive prayer. Teach them, above all, how to pray in an intelligent way, with attention. Show them how to honor our blessed Saviour in the tabernacle, how to make visits to the Blessed Sacrament and what to ask of Him. Lead the children yourself to the altar, and speak to Jesus in a childlike way, in the name of His little ones: "O dear Lord, we firmly believe that Thou art in the tabernacle. We know Thou always lovest little children and art kind to them. Help us to become good and to prepare for our First Communion," etc. At the close of the instruction address our divine Lord again, in the name and language of the children: "We thank Thee for allowing us to come to Thee. We will try to study our catechism and to know more about Thee. Good-by, dear Lord; bless Thy children, and make them pious and obedient." Do not read any prayers out of a prayer-book, but confidently rely on the *dabitur vobis*. Ask the loving Master to give you a strong faith in His presence and to put your priestly heart on fire, and at each instruction the right words will be on your lips.

8. Instruct the children how to practise works of mortification and to *do* something to please Our Lord. These

Digitized by Google

acts should be as simple as possible, and be recommended only for a short time. You might induce them not to look around when one comes late; not to be on the street after dark; to read in a pious book every evening; not to eat candy on Friday, etc. Tell them often not to think of the dress which they will wear nor to care for it, but to leave it entirely to their parents or guardians, as Our Lord looks on the beauty of the soul, not of the body. Three days previous to First Communion the children are to make a kind of a retreat by practising silence more than usual and receiving two instructions daily and making a general confession, as the Second Baltimore Council decreed: *Per triduum autem ante communionem tum exercitationibus piis, tum generali potissimum confessione præparentur proxime ad illam* (l. c.). Drill them in the ceremonies and show them repeatedly the proper manner to receive the Blessed Sacrament. This is a lesson for life.

9. The day of First Communion, if at all possible, should be chosen in the beautiful month of May, when nature is smiling and the means are at hand to adorn churches and homes. It is the will of the Church to have everything solemn. *Ipsa vero die solemnitate maxima Divinum Panem sumant, cuncto populo inspectante* (Conc. Balt. II. l. c.). The decorations of the altar and the vestments should be those used for the highest festival. Have the Mass early. Give a short instruction after the gospel —not longer than fifteen minutes. Address the children directly with a few fervent words, helping them in their immediate preparation for holy communion and asking their prayers for those for whom they should pray. After Mass make fifteen minutes thanksgiving with them aloud, reading some prayers. Have a special service for them in the afternoon, at which they should make their profession of faith and solemnly renew their baptismal vows. Invest all with the brown scapular and briefly explain to them the

Digitized by Google

spiritual benefits. Distribute handsome memorial cards, signed by yourself. The children will not easily forget your generous kindness on their day of days.

10. Have all the children dressed alike: the boys in black and the girls in white. The sexes should be separated, the boys placed at the right or epistle side and the girls at the left. In all Church ceremonies the male sex is considered and treated as the most worthy. See that each child has a new prayer-book. Introduce good customs and prevent abuses. In places where customs exist that appear strange but are not essentially wrong, do not easily interfere with them. If people have brought good Catholic customs from the "old country" to America, strive to foster them rather than to eliminate them. *Omnia autem probate: quod bonum est tenete* (1 Thess. v. 21).

Digitized by Google

SECOND BOOK.

PART I.

THE SACRAMENTS.

§ 14.

The Sacraments in General.

1. Through the means of preaching and catechising the priest prepares souls for the sacraments of the Church, and leads them to union with Christ. The object of all his pastoral activity should consist, *first*, in teaching his people the necessity of the sacraments, the dispositions required for a worthy reception of them, and the meaning of the various ceremonies that surround them; *secondly*, in communicating constantly and faithfully these means of grace to the souls committed to his care, and in thus justifying, sanctifying them, and making them pleasing to God. *Sic nos existimet homo ut ministros Christi: et dispensatores mysteriorum Dei* (1 Cor. iv. 1).

2. The sacraments derive their saving power from the sacred humanity of Christ. *Virtus salutifera a divinitate Christi per ejus humanitatem in ipsa sacramenta derivatur* (St. Thomas, iii. qu. 62, a. 5). He came that we "may have life, and may have it more abundantly." From

Digitized by Google

Him, the living head, flows every life into us, His mystic body. Through the sacramental channels He provides for all our spiritual wants. Baptism gives us life; Confirmation strengthens and invigorates the Christian soul against the struggles of Satan; the Holy Eucharist nourishes spiritual life; Penance restores it when lost by sin; Holy Orders provides teachers and intercessors for the people; Matrimony institutes and sanctifies the Christian family, the foundation of society; Extreme Unction heals the sick and secures the soul against despair, and sweetens the hour of agony. "Thus," remarks the Protestant poet and philosopher, Goethe, "by a splendid circle of equally dignified and sacred actions, the beauty of which we have hardly indicated, the cradle and the grave, however far apart, are bound together." Or, as our own Brownson puts it: "The sacraments meet all the necessities of the soul, in both the natural and the supernatural orders, from its birth to its departure, and even leave us not on the brink of the grave, but accompany us till received into the choir of the just made perfect" (l. c., vol. viii. 561).

3. Christ, the Man-God, is the eternal High-Priest who operates in the soul by means of the sacraments. It is He who really effects the sacraments: it is He who baptizes, forgives sins; it is He who offers Himself upon the altar; and, as He could not remain corporally visible with us, He chose men as His servants, to share in His priesthood, which is one and indivisible, and of which the priests are partakers. The priests are one with Christ, not only as His representatives, but in reality. They stand in closest personal relation to Him, forming one principle of activity in the dispensing of His graces; they are bound to conform their lives to His life. *Ministri se debent Domino conformari* (St. Thom. iii. qu. 64, a. 6). All their sacerdotal power flows from His Passion; whatever they possess belongs to Him.

Digitized by Google

4. There is nothing in the Catholic Church more holy than the seven sacraments instituted by Christ for the salvation and sanctification of men. Father Faber says of them: "The sacraments are the masterpieces of grace, and yet the deepest hiding-places of all. Indeed so various is their beauty, so unearthly their structure, so mysterious their method, so delicate their touches, so revolutionary and yet withal so imperceptible their influence, so peculiar their commingling of matter and spirit, so bashful and instantaneous their miracles, so complete and finished their self-adjusting movements, and so luminous are they, each with its bright cloud of heavenly ceremonial, that quite a science of the divine operations might be constructed out of the theology of the sacraments alone" (*The Blessed Sacrament*). The priest, the minister of the sacraments, must have the most exalted idea and reverence especially for those he is privileged and called to administer. *Quotidie, et quoties sacramentis ministrandis inserviendum est, illud in mentem revocent, sancta sancte, id est, reverenter ac religiose, esse tractanda. Summa igitur diligentia imprimis caveant, nequid eorum desit, sine quibus sacramenti ratio non constat; et quoties de valore sacramenti agitur, rejectis opinionibus, quas probabiles vocant, tutiores amplectantur* (Conc. Balt. II. 207).

5. Theologians distinguish between a *valid* and a *licit* administration of the sacraments. *Hic jam quaeritur inter dispensatores, ut fidelis quis inveniatur* (1 Cor. iv. 2). For a valid administration of the sacraments the minister must have the necessary power and will to confer them; for a licit administration the state of grace and observance of the ecclesiastical ordinances are required. Moreover, the minister must have the intention of doing what the Church does. He is obliged to have at least a *virtual* intention, though he should strive to have an *actual* intention, out of reverence for the sacrament and the benefit of

Digitized by Google

his own soul. A *reflective* intention should not be sought; it might easily lead to scruples. It is not necessary to say with the lips or even in the heart: I intend to give this or that sacrament. It is sufficient, for instance, to confer the Sacrament of Penance validly if the priest leaves the house and goes to church to hear confessions, though in the act of absolving he is distracted and does not reflect on what he is doing.

6. The priest will undoubtedly have the required intention, if, not only before celebrating Mass, but before administering any sacrament, he prepares his heart and mind by prayer and meditation; at least, if he reflects for a few moments on the sublime act he is about to perform. St. Charles Borromeo recommends the recitation of the *Veni Sancte Spiritus*. The *Manuale Sacerdotum* of Schneider contains beautiful prayers to be said before and after the administration of the various sacraments; the *oratio audituri confessiones* has an indulgence attached to it; it serves as an excellent preparation for the holy tribunal.

7. Though the validity and the effect of a sacrament do not depend on the worthiness of the minister, yet the latter must be in the state of grace in order to administer it licitly. He who administers a sacrament in mortal sin is guilty of a sacrilege, and, as the Roman Ritual distinctly says: *Impure et indigne ministrantes in aeternae mortis reatum incurrunt.* And as he may be called on at any time to confer a sacrament, and as he should be always ready to do so, he is bound to lead a truly sacerdotal life, to guard unsullied "the vesture of holiness," and be ever united with the great High-Priest. *Perpetuo curabit, ut integre, caste, pieque vitam agat* (*Rit. Rom.*). A frequent confession is of the highest importance to persevere in grace and advance in perfection; besides, a priest should, if possible, go every two weeks in order to gain the many indulgences that are daily at his disposal.

Digitized by Google

8. The priest must be a faithful observer of rubrics. In the election of a bishop, Rome asks about the proposed candidate, *an rubricarum sit studiosus observator.* The Catechism of the Council of Trent remarks: "The ceremonies themselves also display more fully, and place, as it were, before the eyes, the effects of the sacraments, and impress more deeply on the minds of the faithful the holiness of these things." By a close observance of the rubrics the priest shows a religious reverence towards the sacred mysteries whilst he edifies the faithful. The prayers should be said slowly and distinctly. The minister must not easily trust his memory, but always, if possible, use the book. The change of a single word of the form might render a sacrament invalid. The manner also in which the ceremonies are performed should evidence a lively faith and an unfeigned piety, and help to foster devotion in the observers. The Second Baltimore Council exhorts priests, *dum sacramenta ministrant, verba distincte et articulatim pronuntientur; incessus, vultus, corporis motus, vocis modulatio, rei sanctissimae, quae agitur, conscientiam exprimant, et fideles ad firmam fidem devotionemque intimam excitent. Praeterea pro viribus et rerum adjunctis curent sacerdotes, ut nitida et decora sint, quae ad sacramentorum dispensationem requiruntur* (n. 208).

9. The priest is obliged to observe the diocesan regulations or episcopal orders about residence. He should live among his flock, who may find him at any time in case of necessity. He should love his home, however humble and unpretentious it may be. *Cella continuata,* says Thomas à Kempis, *dulcescit, male custodita taedium generat.* A priest who dislikes his pastoral residence, who is ill at ease unless away from it, will not gain nor retain, if he have it, the affection or the respect of his people; they will think "he hath no care for the sheep." The

Digitized by Google

synod of Liège indicates the evil consequences of a frequent and unnecessary absence on the part of the pastor: *Caveant a frequentioribus, etiam ad magnam diei partem tantum a parochia excursionibus, memores, frequentiores exitus indicium esse animi vagi, res serias ac praesertim studia fastidientis ac parum de suis solliciti, gregemque ex iteratis illis absentiis haud exiguum detrimentum capere* (n. 55. 1°).

10. When sent for by any of his people, the priest should obey the summons without delay or hesitation. It may happen that there is no real need of his coming, but it is always better to go, though he may suspect that his presence is not strictly necessary. His visit is never useless: the Lord will reward every step he takes in His service, and the people will become convinced that their good priest is ever willing to attend to their spiritual wants. The priest is obliged to give the sacraments, at least those of Baptism and Penance, even at the risk of his life, as, for example, in time of contagious diseases. *Bonus pastor animam suam dat pro ovibus suis... mercenarius autem fugit, quia mercenarius est* (John x. 11, 13). In such cases the sacramental grace of Holy Orders comes to the assistance of the priest and braves his heart against danger and death. The voice of the Holy Spirit whispers into his soul: *Meus es tu.... Cum ambulaveris in igne, non combureris, et flamma non ardebit in te.... Noli timere, quia ego tecum sum* (Isaias xliii. 1–5). He should, however, take every reasonable precaution against malignant and catching diseases; he should not despise the natural means or neglect preventive methods to protect his health and life. Therefore do not, if possible, enter the sick-room when fasting, or when tired and exhausted by hard work or feeling unwell. A glass of wine, taken immediately after a visit to a person affected with a contagious or very loathsome sickness, will banish depression,

Digitized by Google

bring on a reaction, and often prevent serious consequences.

11. The sacraments are of the spiritual order; they cannot be estimated at a temporal price. *Gratis accepistis, gratis date* (Matt. x. 8). The minister of the sacraments must carefully avoid the shadow of simony and the slightest suspicion of avarice. He is not allowed, for example, before baptizing to ask the parties if they have the usual offering; nor should he manifest the least displeasure if he does not receive anything nor the full amount of the tariff. It is useful to announce occasionally the amount of the customary oblation at baptisms, marriages, funerals, etc., and to say, for instance, it is customary to give so much at the christening of a child; but it should be added: Those who cannot afford to offer any money should come without fear or shame, as the priest is bound before God and His Church to treat rich and poor alike. The words of the Second Baltimore Council should never be forgotten: *Edicimus, ne quid pro sacramentorum administratione exigere, petere, aut pacisci quisquam audeat. Ea vero, quae pietatis studio post collatum baptisma vel matrimonium, eleemosynae nomine, a fidelibus sponte offeruntur, Sacerdos, si velit accipiat* (n. 221).

CHAPTER I.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

§ 15.

Necessity of Baptism. Matter, Form, Minister.

1. Baptism, "the sacrament of regeneration by water in the word," is spiritual birth in Christ and His Church. By nature we are the sons of Adam, the children of wrath; by grace, in Baptism, we become the sons of God, the chil-

Digitized by Google

dren of mercy. There are two nativities, as St. Augustine explains: *Una est de terra, alia de coelo: una est de carne, alia de Spiritu; una est de mortalitate, alia est de aeternitate; una est de masculo et femina, alia de Deo et Ecclesia* (*In Joannem*, tract xi. n. 6). This nativity by Baptism is of absolute *necessity*. Without it we cannot be engrafted on divine life nor receive its sap of immortality. To be born of woman is to have natural life; to be born of God and His Church is to possess spiritual life. *Quod natum est ex carne, caro est: et quod natum est ex Spiritu, spiritus est* (John iii. 6). A divine act is required to produce divine life; a merely natural life has no claim to heaven. *Caro et sanguis regnum Dei possidere non possunt* (1 Cor. xv. 50). Baptism opens the gate of the heavenly kingdom and bids us to enter and take possession of our inheritance.

2. Clear and distinct are the words of Christ, inculcating the absolute necessity of Baptism. And yet there are so many outside the Catholic Church who read the New Testament and profess themselves as "Bible Christians," but who neglect or even despise the way by which they might enter into the fold of Christ; and the "ministers of the Gospel" themselves look upon Baptism as a merely edifying ceremony, not in the least essential for obtaining God's grace. The number of unbaptized Protestants is appalling. Unfortunately this spirit of indifference towards the sacrament of regeneration occasionally affects Catholics. Living among unregenerated people, Catholic parents are sometimes careless about the baptism of their offspring. The Second Baltimore Council adverts to this sad fact, and request pastors of souls to inveigh against the evil. *Detestabilem quoque parentum Catholicorum socordiam, qui parvulorum aetatem tot casibus obnoxiam non statim baptismatis sacramento muniendam curant, volumus ut pastores animarum acerrime ac*

Digitized by Google

saepius reprehendant (n. 225). This should be done at instructions or sermons on Baptism. It would be imprudent and more injurious than useful to attack the parents or sponsors of the child immediately before baptizing, to scold them for not bringing the child at an earlier date, though a few kind words spoken after the administration of the sacrament may be productive of a change in the future.

3. As the Sacrament of Baptism is necessary for all, the merciful God has made it possible that in case of necessity it may be conferred by anybody having the use of reason and applying the matter and form. The priest is obliged in conscience frequently to teach and show his people, and especially doctors and midwives, the manner of giving *private* Baptism. *Curent sacerdotes, ut omnes fideles, praesertim medici, nutrices et obstetrices privati baptismatis conferendi modum rite calleant. Sedulo etiam explicent gravissimam, qua tenentur omnes absente sacerdote, obligationem illud infantibus, vel adultis consentientibus, qui in proximo mortis periculo forte constituantur, impertiendi* (Conc. Balt. II. n. 228).

4. The *materia remota* of Baptism is water; the *materia proxima* is ablution with water. Theologians discuss at length what liquid can be called water and consequently is sufficient for the validity of the sacrament, and what is meant by doubtful matter. The *Catechismus Romanus* says that water is used in Baptism as a most fit matter, for it admirably expresses the effect of the sacrament. *Ut enim aqua sordes abluit; ita etiam Baptismi vim atque efficientiam, quo peccatorum maculae eluuntur, optime demonstrat. Accedit illud, quod quemadmodum aqua refrigerandis corporibus aptissima est: sic Baptismo cupiditatum ardor magna ex parte restringitur* (pars ii. cap. ii).

5. Though common, natural water suffices for the validity of Baptism, yet the priest is obliged *sub mortali* to

Digitized by Google

use baptismal water in *solemn* Baptism. Baptismal water is blessed on Holy Saturday and on the vigil of Pentecost. Although a sufficient quantity for the entire year is still in the font, and though there has not been a single Baptism since Easter, still the rubric is to be observed. The remaining baptismal water should be poured into the sacrarium and new water be blessed on the eve of Pentecost. Solemn Baptism is conferred whenever the priest baptizes with all the ceremonies prescribed by the Ritual, whether it be in the church or in a private house. In case of *private* Baptism, the priest should also use, if possible, baptismal water, which he may carry along in a small vessel. Lay people, however, should be told to use common, not holy, water in baptizing (see Decree S. C. S. Officii, June 22, 1883). When the baptismal water becomes really corrupt and unfit for use, it is to be removed from the font; and after the latter has been thoroughly cleansed, new water should be poured in and blessed according to the *Formula conficiendae aquae baptismalis*. When the baptismal water is made, a thin scum is soon formed on the surface of the font, from the oils used in the blessing. This does not render the water unfit for sacramental use, but O'Kane suggests that it "be removed with a little cotton, and burned or thrown into the sacrarium" (*Notes on the Rubrics*, n. 163).

6. All the words of the form of Baptism, with the exception of the *ego*, *et*, and probably the *in*, are essential. Lay people should use the vernacular: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here the pronoun *I* is absolutely necessary. The word *Amen* does not belong to the form, and cannot be added. The words are to be pronounced while the water is poured on. Often teach the people that, in private Baptism, the child (or person) is not baptized unless the water is poured at the same time that the words are said, and that the *same* person who says the words must also pour the

Digitized by Google

water. If Baptism be given conditionally, it is necessary to express, in words, the condition: a mere intention of baptizing *sub conditione* is not sufficient.

7. The priest of the parish or mission is the minister of solemn Baptism. In the territory of another pastor no pastor is allowed to baptize solemnly, not even one of his own parishioners, without due permission (Canon 739). In case of real necessity, however, anybody may baptize privately, though it would be wrong for a laic to do so in the presence of a priest, deacon, sub-deacon, or cleric who is willing to confer the sacrament, unless modesty requires the ministry of a woman, *e. g.*, in difficult parturition. A laic who gives private Baptism contracts a spiritual relationship with the child, hence, unless dispensed, there could be no marriage between them. Parents should never baptize their own child, *extreme* necessity excluded. If a child be seriously sick, but in no immediate danger of death, lay people should not baptize it, but call the priest, who is supposed to attend without delay. "However," Frassinetti wisely remarks, "there is no need to be over-scrupulous on this point, for it will be a lesser harm that a lay person should administer Baptism than to run the risk of allowing the infant to die unbaptized through waiting for the priest. Therefore let him preach absolutely that when the life of the child is believed to be in danger, Baptism ought to be administered by any one who may happen to be present; but that should the child be merely sick, and not actually in a dying condition, the parish priest ought to be summoned to perform the ceremony. And since an accident is always possible, let him caution the people that, while awaiting the arrival of the parish priest, some one should remain constantly with the child, having water at hand, so as to be ready at any moment to administer Baptism, should the infant begin to fail more quickly than was expected" (*Parish Priest's Manual*, part ii. chap. i).

Digitized by Google

§ 16.

Baptism of Infants.

1. The Roman Ritual directs that infants be brought to the church *quam primum fieri potest.* A decree of the S. Cong. Inquis. (1855) says not to wait longer than three days. The frail and delicate life of the child is exposed to so many accidents that it could be easily extinguished. Theologians do not agree as to what extent a delay would constitute a mortal sin. Lehmkuhl is of opinion, barring an episcopal order or serious danger to the child, that a delay of three to eight days would be no sin whatever. But priests should often urge parents to bring the child on the second or third day after birth and not to leave the little one any longer in original sin; they should know the difference between a baptized and an unbaptized child;* they should realize what blessing the youngest member

* "A child is brought to the baptismal font, fair and beautiful, and with all the winning gracefulness of infantine infirmity about it. But, fair as it is, it is hardly God's possession. A curse is on its soul; around its spirit is the darkness, and on all its faculties the hideous stain, or disabling imputation, of original sin; as it is, it can never see God nor be the heir of heaven. It can inherit nothing beyond natural beatitude. The exorcisms are but a prelude to the momentary act of Baptism; and then what has happened to the child? A new birth has taken place far better than its first. The curse is broken off; it has become a child of God, a living member of Jesus Christ. Even in the eyes of Heaven it shines with grace and beauty. Its soul, with the dormant reason there, is filled with supernatural habits which consecrate it into a sanctuary, and with a multitude of infused virtues which are the germs of angelic holiness. Yet as it lies in its nurse's arms, what change is there in its look, its eye, its limbs? Perhaps it has sunk to sleep there, tired with the attentions of which it has been the object, as an unfledged bird sleeps in its nest, or the white lamb in the sunny field: or perhaps with cries and tears it is expressing its petulant vexation with the physical annoyance of the very salutary waters which have made it from a slave of Satan to be a brother or a sister of the angels" (Father Faber's *The Blessed Sacrament,* book iii. sec. 5).

Digitized by Google

brings into the family, with its white robe of innocence and its bright angel hovering around it and guarding its first slumbers. No motives of family convenience should interfere with the administration of Baptism. The priest ought to take a firm step regarding this matter, and let the people feel that he is not anxious to burden his conscience by a silent approval of a delay which might prove fatal to some child.

2. If the priest has been summoned to a dying infant (or grown person) he is not permitted to use the ceremonies for solemn Baptism, but he has to baptize *privately i.e.*, begin with the *Ego te baptizo*, etc., and then continue the ceremonies which follow. "When a priest," says O'Kane, "is called on to baptize, in a case of necessity, in a private house, or in any other place than the church, it is certain that he is not allowed to perform any of the ceremonies which precede the application of the matter and the form, even though there be no danger of the infant's death until all the ceremonies could be completed. He should vest in a white stole, and, after pouring on the water, apply the ceremonies which follow, leaving those that precede, and for which the violet stole is worn, to be afterwards supplied in the church. This has been expressly decided by the Sacred Congregation, Sept. 23, 1820" (n. 382). If a sick child, privately baptized, recovers, it should be brought to church as soon as possible, because the remaining ceremonies have to be supplied *et quidem sub gravi*, according to St. Alphonsus. Conditional Baptism entitles to Christian burial.

3. Before the Second Council of Baltimore the custom prevailed in the United States, especially in country places, to baptize in private houses with all the ceremonies of the Ritual. The Fathers of this Council forbade priests hereafter to administer Baptism *extra Ecclesiam*, and decreed that those living in country places should bring the child

Digitized by Google

to the nearest church or station where Mass is usually said. *Quod si ob aeris intemperiem, itineris difficultatem, parentum inopiam, vel alias graves causas hoc fieri nequeat, tunc missionarii prudentiae et conscientiae relinquimus, ut eos domi cum omnibus Ecclesiae caeremoniis baptizet* (n. 237). It is clear that, in a missionary district, where there is no church, the child cannot be brought to it; nor could poor people be obliged to travel for miles to reach a church and perhaps expose the little one to personal danger. Mere convenience, or even danger of death, in places where there is a church, are no reasons for baptizing *extra Ecclesiam* with all the ceremonies. Frassinetti mentions one case, however, in which a priest should ask the bishop's permission to baptize solemnly in a private house, though a church be near: "Should it happen that the parents obstinately refuse to bring the infant to the church, and it must consequently remain without Baptism, the danger to which the child's salvation would be thus exposed would constitute a case of necessity, not absolute but relative, in which the parish priest could and ought to procure permission to baptize in the house. Baptism is a matter of real necessity for the infant: if, through its parents' fault, it cannot receive the sacrament in the church, it has a right to receive it in whatever way it can be best administered" (l. c. § 4).*

4. The child cannot be baptized in the mother's womb

* This seems to be in conformity with an Instruction given by the S. Cong. de Propaganda Fide (*Collectanea*, n. 611, ad 4): *Si vero praevideatur quod parentes infantium neque decursu temporis infantes suos ad Ecclesiam pro supplendis caeremoniis deferri permittant, tunc satius erit ut in ipsis privatis domibus ritus et caeremoniae per Rituale Romanum praescriptae in actu collationis Baptismi adhibeantur. Potius enim erit ut laudabilis consuetudo, quae tantum concernit majorem erga hoc sacramentum decentiam et reverentiam, celebrandi Baptismum in ecclesia, omittatur, quam ut priventur parvuli baptizati non exiguis spiritualibus bonis quae ex adhibitis super eos sacris caeremoniis ab Ecclesia institutis in ipsos derivantur.*

Digitized by Google

unless there is a probability that it will not be born alive. If the mother dies before giving birth, and there is the least hope of life in the child, it should be extracted immediately. It is never allowed to destroy the child in order to save the life of the mother. Craniotomy cannot be performed unless the child is surely dead. The priest must prudently, though energetically, use his influence to prevent malpractice on the part of medical men. He has to be well posted on the morality of modern obstetrical operations, and should know the decisions of the Holy See concerning abortion, anticipating natural birth, etc.

5. When the child is presented for Baptism the priest is obliged to inquire whether it has been previously baptized, and, if so, to ascertain the validity of the Baptism conferred. If the slightest doubt remains, *after diligent inquiry into each particular case*, Baptism is administered *conditionally*. This is generally done with foundlings, children baptized by midwives and other laics. Do not rely on any second-hand information. Make the person who baptized the child show how it was done. *Nulla datur major securitas, quando periclitatur æternitas.* Children of non-Catholic parents who are offered for Baptism with the consent of one of the parents should be baptized when there is hope of a Catholic education; the child must have a Catholic sponsor. In danger of death any child is to be baptized.

NOTE.—O'Kane gives a few hints about "the baptizing" which are of great practical value: "The water which is poured on the head in Baptism should never be permitted to fall back into the font from which it is taken. It should either fall immediately into the sacrarium of the baptistery, or be received in a basin or vessel provided for the purpose, and be afterwards poured into the sacrarium of the baptistery or of the church. The object of the rubric is to preserve the water from impurities, and to prevent the

Digitized by Google

danger of infection. Immediately adjoining the baptismal font, and on the same or a somewhat lower level, so that the head of the infant can be conveniently held over it while the water is being poured on, there should be constructed a sacrarium, or basin communicating with the earth by means of a pipe. The font itself is sometimes divided into two compartments, one of which communicates with the earth, and serves as the sacrarium. This arrangement is very convenient, and has been adopted in most of the fonts recently constructed. Should Baptism be administered in a church which has no baptismal font, or a font which has no sacrarium immediately annexed, the water flowing from the head of the child ought to be received in a vessel, as here directed, and afterwards poured into the sacrarium. Should it be administered in a private house, the water ought to be received in like manner, and conveyed to the sacrarium of the baptistery or church; or, if this be found too inconvenient, it may be thrown into the fire, as is directed by the Constitutions of St. Edmund of Canterbury. Whether the water used has been blessed or not, it should be disposed of in this way, since it has been used as matter of the sacrament; and the reason assigned in the Constitutions is simply *propter reverentiam Baptismi*" (n. 181–184).

§ 17.

Baptismal Requisites.

1. The Baptismal Font is, after the altar, the most sacred object in the church. Baptizing in church supposes the existence of a font, or a baptistery, as it is frequently called. The rubrics leave considerable latitude as to the size, shape, material, and construction of the font; they require, however, that it be kept under lock and key. St.

Digitized by Google

Charles ordered it to be placed near the entrance of the church so that the ceremonies might be conveniently observed and the faithful be reminded that by Baptism we enter the Holy Church of God. "The place set apart for it should be railed off, and if possible form a distinct chapel, adorned with a representation of St. John baptizing Christ" (O'Kane, n. 243). In a poor mission it may be difficult to carry out this instruction, but there is no place where the font cannot be kept clean and decent. "A shabby baptistery," says Frassinetti, "is one of those things which are least tolerable in a church, and it affords one of the clearest proofs we could have that the parish priest is an indolent man, possessed of little faith" (l. c. § 1).

2. The Holy Oils used in Baptism are chrism and the oil of the catechumens, both blessed by the bishop on the preceding Holy Thursday. The unction with chrism after Baptism is a vertical one, on the crown of the head; the bishop alone can use chrism on the forehead. The priest must procure the holy oils from his own bishop as soon as possible, since he has to use them for the blessing of the font on Holy Saturday. Necessity, such as considerable distance, difficulty of travelling, would justify a delay. If the new oils are not at hand on Holy Saturday, but are expected within a week or ten days, the infusion of oils is omitted at the blessing of the font and is afterwards supplied privately. When there is no prospect, however, of obtaining the holy oils within a reasonable time the font is to be blessed with the old oils. In the first case a little baptismal water should be reserved for emergencies until the new oils arrive. Whatever is left of the old oils should be burned in the sanctuary lamp. The vessels containing the holy oils should be of silver, or at least of tin or pewter, and not of glass, iron, brass, or any very oxidable matter; they should be marked clearly with letters so as

Digitized by Google

to distinguish the different oils. They should be kept in the church, in a safe place near the altar. Laics are not allowed to touch these vessels nor to carry the holy oils, except in case of necessity. (For further information about the keeping of the holy oils see the admirable Notes of O'Kane, n. 248–270.)

3. The Salt which is blessed for Baptism and kept for this purpose, and cannot be used *ad faciendam aquam benedictam*, should be common natural salt, such as is used in seasoning food. It should be reduced to a fine powder that it may be easily given in a small quantity so as not to sicken the child. It may serve for several months at many baptisms if it be kept clean and dry.

4. The White Garment which the priest places on the head of the child after Baptism is usually a piece of white linen, about the size of a handkerchief. In some countries the *vestis candida* is brought along by parents or sponsors. Any piece of clean linen will serve for the purpose, but it should be white, and not contradict its name. The *Catechismus Romanus* gives the deep symbolic meaning of the white garment; it signifies *tum resurrectionis gloriam, ad quam per Baptismum nascimur; tum nitorem et pulchritudinem, qua, dilutis peccatorum maculis, anima in Baptismo ornatur; tum innocentiam atque integritatem, quam in omni vita baptizatus servare debet* (l. c. qu. 58).

5. The Blessed Candle which the priest puts into the hand of the sponsor should be lighted. It is recommended to light this candle when beginning the ceremonies of Baptism. The *Catechismus Romanus* gives the mystic meaning: *Caereus ardens in manum traditus, ut ostendat fidem caritate inflammatam, quam in Baptismo accepit, bonorum operum studio alendam atque augendam esse.* The words of the priest, spoken in presenting the candle, are an allusion to the parable of the prudent virgins: "Receive this burning light, and keep thy baptism with-

Digitized by Google

out blame. Observe the commandments of God; that when Our Lord shall come to His nuptials thou mayest meet Him together with all the saints in the heavenly court, and mayest have life everlasting, and live forever and ever. Amen."

6. THE NAME imposed on the child in Baptism should be that of a saint, and not that of a heathen or a merely secular hero. The *Catechismus Romanus* explains the reason: *Ita enim facile fiet, ut quisquis nominis similitudine, ad sanctitatis et virtutis imitationem excitetur; ac praeterea, quem imitari studeat, eum quoque precetur, et speret sibi advocatum tum ad salutem animi, tum corporis defendendam, venturum esse. Quare reprehendendi sunt, qui gentilium nomina, et eorum praecipue, qui omnium sceleratissimi fuerunt, tam diligenter consectantur et pueris imponunt.* Old Testament names are not strictly rubrical; they are rather of Puritan fashion. The child should be baptized with the name of a *Christian* saint. This, however, is not a rigorous precept, but an admonition to the priest. The principal right of naming a child belongs to the parents; the priest should strive that it be always named after a saint. If people present names that are not Christian, induce them to put the name of a saint before the other names: if it be a girl, persuade them to prefix the glorious name of Mary; if it be a boy, the name of St. Joseph may be admitted, or the priest might suggest his own Christian name: this I frequently did, and always succeeded in procuring a saint's name for the little boy instead of Grover Cleveland, Greenleaf Whittier, and the like. If they present the names of George Washington, Patrick Sarsfield, Otto Bismarck, Robert Emmet, quietly accept them, use only the names of George, Patrick, Otto, and Robert in baptizing, but place all the names given on the baptismal records.

7. SPONSORS, also called GODFATHERS and GODMOTHERS, assist at Baptism to answer for the child as its spiritual

Digitized by Google

parents. One, or at most two, and then male and female, are admitted as sponsors. Father or mother is not permitted to act as sponsor of their own child, *ut ex eo magis appareat, quantum haec spiritualis educatio a carnali distet* (*Catech. Rom.*). Boys and girls under fourteen years of age should not be admitted as sponsors, nor, generally speaking, any young people who have not been confirmed. It might be conceded to admit a little child with an adult of different sex as sponsors. Where no sponsors can be found, the priest may baptize without them. At private Baptism a sponsor should be had if easily possible, who contracts spiritual relationship. The presence of sponsors is required at the supplying of ceremonies, and though they contract no impediment, yet they are obliged to look after the religious education of the child. A priest baptizing can be sponsor if somebody acts and answers in his place. A non-Catholic cannot be sponsor. Be prudent if a Protestant comes along to act as sponsor; let him stand aside of the Catholic party and look on, and make no mention of him in the records. But, if only non-Catholics come, then call a Catholic (the sexton, housekeeper, or any one near to you) and make him touch the child physically during the pouring of the water, with the intention of being sponsor. Do not reject a careless or lukewarm Catholic, one who stays away from Mass or misses his Easter duty. He must be a public sinner before he can thus be punished publicly. The *Catechismus Romanus* indicates the responsibilities of sponsors: *Hoc igitur universe susceptores semper cogitent, se hac potissimum lege obstrictos esse, ut spirituales filios perpetuo commendatos habeant; atque in iis, quae ad Christianae vitae institutionem spectant, curent diligenter, ut illi tales se in omni vita praebeant, quales eos futuros esse solemni caeremonia spoponderunt.*

Digitized by Google

§ 18.

Converts.

1. The Church requires infants to be presented for Baptism *quam primum fieri potest;* but when there is question of the baptism of an adult, she insists on a delay long enough to instruct and prepare him for his entrance into the Church. Under *adult* we here understand any person who has attained the perfect use of reason; this is presumed in all who have attained the seventh year. Nothing short of a case of extreme necessity will dispense from this instruction for Baptism, which must precede it *secundum apostolicam regulam;* the apostles first preached and instructed and then baptized according to divine ordinance. The Angelic Doctor succinctly gives the reasons for such a salutary precept: *Primo quidem propter cautelam Ecclesiae ne decipiatur, sacramentum ficte accedentibus conferens, secundum illud* (1 John iv. 1): "*Nolite omni spiritui credere, sed probate spiritus, si ex Deo sint*"; *quae quidem probatio sumitur de accedentibus ad baptismum, quando per aliquod spatium eorum fides et mores examinantur. Secundo hoc est necessarium ad utilitatem eorum qui baptizantur, quia aliquo temporis spatio indigent, ad hoc quod plene instruantur de fide et exercitentur in his quae pertinent ad vitam christianam. Tertio hoc est necessarium ad quamdam reverentiam sacramenti, dum in solemnitatibus praecipuis, scilicet Paschae et Pentecostes, homines ad baptismum admittuntur, et ita devotius sacramentum suscipiunt* (iii. qu. 68, art. 3). This ancient discipline of confining the administration of Baptism to the vigils of Easter and Pentecost has been relaxed. But cathedral churches should retain the ancient custom, and have the sacrament administered on these vigils, as is done in Rome.

Digitized by Google

2. In Baptism we die to sin and rise to a new life; we renounce the devil and engage in the service of God. He alone who is willing to be baptized can receive this sacrament; an intention is necessary for its validity. An adult conscious of actual mortal sin and without sorrow for it may receive the character of Baptism, but not the grace of the sacrament. To receive Baptism licitly and with fruit certain dispositions are required, according to the *Catechismus Romanus:* (*a*) Faith in all that God has revealed and proposes to our belief by His holy Church. *Qui crediderit, et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit* (Mark xvi. 16). (*b*) Compunction for past sins and a firm resolution not to sin in the future. As the amount of sacramental grace given in Baptism depends on the dispositions, the candidate should carefully prepare by some pious exercises and make, if possible, what is commonly called a retreat.

3. Faith comes from hearing. *Quomodo autem audient sine praedicante?* (Rom. x. 14.) The priest is the official instructor of the catechumen, but he may avail himself of the assistance of intelligent laics who can efficiently teach catechism. Ladies should be sent to the nuns for instruction, if a convent be near. Whenever the priest has to instruct a lady, she should always come to him accompanied by another, a good Catholic woman. He ought to be exceedingly prudent and careful of his reputation: kind, but reserved; mild, but firm; sincere, but cautious; so that while kindling the holy fire in the hearts of others, the light of faith may burn undimmed in his own soul. The candidate should study the approved catechism of the diocese, and learn by heart the *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*, together with the *Apostles' Creed.* No one can be baptized unless he knows, at least in substance and according to his capacity, the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Apostles' Creed*, the *Decalogue*, the sacraments of *Baptism*, *Penance*, and the *Eucharist.* Should a catechumen fall dan-

Digitized by Google

gerously ill before his instruction is completed, it will suffice to explain to him *fidei mysteria quae sunt necessaria necessitate medii, ut sunt praecipua mysteria Trinitatis et Incarnationis* (*Analecta Juris Pont.*, 2d series). Moreover, the Second Council of Baltimore says: *Baptizandi etiam sunt adulti omnes moribundi, quoties prudenter judicari potest, eos non certo respuere fidei gratiam; tunc enim sub conditione baptizari possunt* (n. 230). In dealing with a married catechumen the priest should carefully examine the validity of his marriage. A diriment impediment may exist, and prove his marriage to be a mere concubinage before God. In such a case the catechumen cannot be left *in good faith:* he must be informed of the invalidity of his marriage, though the revelation may keep him from entering the Catholic Church.

4. The living voice of the Catholic preacher is a powerful element for conversion. At a time of a mission non-Catholics are moved by the earnestness of the missionaries and by their forcible arguments appealing to the conscience. If they ask for admission into the one saving Church, they should be instructed by the priest in charge of the church at which the mission is given. It has happened too frequently that men converted and baptized during the hurry and excitement of the mission became notorious apostates, "lately converted from Romanism," *mali . . . seductores, proficient in pejus* (2 Tim. iii. 13). We learn from the *Monita ad Missionarios S. Cong. de Propag. Fide*, cap. vii. art. 1, that the time for the instruction and preparation of catechumens should not be, as a general rule, less than forty days. *Quamobrem, etsi hodie sacerdotibus committatur judicium de catechumenorum eruditione, aliisque necessariis conditionibus, adeoque eo de tempore catechismi ferendum, ut iis sanctum, Baptisma conferatur; rectius tamen et securius nobis visum est cum Patribus et Conciliis, catechismi tempus non breviori,*

Digitized by Google

quam quadraginta dierum spatio vulgo definire; nec alios ad Baptismum admittendos, nisi ante quadraginta dies nomen dederint.

5. When the candidate has been sufficiently instructed in the doctrines of our holy religion an inquiry is to be made about the validity of his previous baptism. If he is still a pagan (as many are who call themselves Protestants), he is to be baptized unconditionally. If his baptism was valid, he has to make his profession of faith, after which he is absolved from censures. If a doubt remains about the validity of his baptism, he is received into the Church in this order: (*a*) Profession of faith and absolution from censures; (*b*) Conditional Baptism; (*c*) Sacramental confession, with conditional absolution. Wapelhorst gives the manner in which the examination about the validity of Baptism is to be made (*Comp. S. Liturgiae*, editio 5a, p. 407).

6. Great tact is required in first receiving a candidate and in finding out the motives actuating him when he seeks admission into the Church. Does he wish to marry a "bigoted" Catholic girl who wisely refuses to become the wife of a heretic? Does he gain money by the change? Has he a rich Catholic uncle who may die childless? Will the priest procure him employment? Such motives are not pure, indeed, and are rather calculated to discourage a priest. But the case may be worse: the candidate may hide his motives completely, and profess a sincere longing to find and enter the true Church of God, though the priest is aware of his hypocrisy. Even in such a case St. Augustine bids us to be hopeful: *Plane saepe adest misericordia Dei per ministerium catechizantis, ut sermone commotus jam fieri velit, quod decreverat fingere: quod cum velle coeperit, tunc eum venisse deputemus* (*De Catech. Rud.* c. 5). Just as in the confessional we are pleased when a great sinner appears, whatever his present disposi-

Digitized by Google

tion may be, so we should rejoice at a non-Catholic coming for instruction, though his motives be not praiseworthy; with God's assistance and patience on our part we may soon succeed in purifying his motives and effecting in him a real desire of conversion. Even if he comes with a lie on his lips, we should bear with him and show him the ways of truth, as the same great Doctor explains: *Si ficto pectore accessit, humana commoda cupiens, vel incommoda fugiens, utique mentiturus est: tamen ex eo ipso, quod mentitur, capiendum est principium: non ut refellatur ejus mendacium quasi tibi certum sit; sed ut, si dixerit, eo proposito se venisse, quod vere approbandum est, sive ille verum, sive falsum dicat, tale tamen propositum, quali se venisse respondit, approbantes atque laudantes, faciamus eum delectari esse se talem, qualem videri cupit. Si autem aliud dixerit, quam oportet esse in animo ejus, qui christiana fide imbuendus est, blandius et lenius reprehendendo tamquam rudem et ignarum, et christianae doctrinae finem verissimum demonstrando atque laudando breviter et graviter, ne aut tempora futurae narrationis occupes, aut eam non prius collocato animo audeas imponere, facias eum velle, quod aut per errorem aut per simulationem nondum volebat* (l. c.).

7. We never should forget that conversion is, and must be, the work of divine grace. It never is the mere result of study or of scientific investigation. Reasoning and proving can do but little to convert a man, to dispel the clouds of darkness which the evil spirit has piled up before his eyes. Unless the grace of God enlighten the mind and move the heart, all instruction will be vain and useless. The would-be convert must have a sincere will to turn to God for light and strength. He must ask, seek, and knock, that he may receive, find, and it be opened to him. He must throw the doors of his heart wide open to receive the truth "as the sunflower opens her bosom to

Digitized by Google

the rays of the sun," and to permit the truth to penetrate the soul and to give it light, warmth, and life. He must come to the Catholic Church fully realizing that he is a sinner who humbly seeks pardon, and begs to be cleansed from spiritual defilement, and to be changed into a just man; he must be convinced that he sorely needs the Church, and that the Church has no need of him, no matter how good and honest or how learned and influential he may be. These are sentiments which the priest must foster in the heart of his catechumen: a sense of deep humility, of personal weakness, and entire dependence on God's mercy for salvation. Such feelings we find in the truly converted heart of Brownson, who, after his reception into the Church, devoted his magnificent talents for her defence, and nevertheless said, "After all, we have brought her [the Church] nothing to boast of—nothing but our sins, our ignorance, and our infirmities" (l. c., vol. xiv. 159).

8. A true priest cannot be indifferent about the eternal salvation of his non-Catholic fellow-men amongst whom he lives and works; he must earnestly desire their conversion. He, therefore, ought to pray for it continually and labor for it indefatigably. We would say to him: Remove obstacles which prevent conversion. One of the greatest obstacles to conversion is the misconduct, the scandalous life, of some Catholics. Make your Catholic people lead a truly Christian life; make them faithful, obedient, devout, charitable, temperate. Avoid all that generally irritates non-Catholics and alienates them more from the Church. Lead such a life that they needs must respect you, if they respect honor and virtue. The more firmly you cling to the faith and live up to your priestly calling, the more Protestants will hold you in esteem. Bear with their faults, especially with their narrow-mindedness, their intolerant spirit, and prejudices. Take them as they are, and

Digitized by Google

not as they ought to be; think that you might be worse had you been brought up in the same circumstances as they. Above all, have real charity towards them—the charity of which the Apostle says: *Charitas patiens est, benigna est, . . . non irritatur, non cogitat malum, . . . omnia suffert, omnia credit, omnia sperat, omnia sustinet* (1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, 7).

9. In wishing our American fellow-citizens who are outside the Church the grace of conversion, we wish them the best thing we can think of. And if we truly love America, we must ardently long to see it become entirely Catholic, and we must do all in our power to bring about the realization of these our fondest hopes. The conversion of America, however, is to be accomplished not by any new and unusual means, not by appeals to patriotism or to national proclivities, not by minimizing the Catholic doctrine of atonement and extenuating devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, or palliating the stern and inflexible principles of morality, but chiefly by the self-sacrifice and devotion of the priesthood and by the prayers and good example of our Catholic people. The task of converting America may be difficult, but the issue appears hopeful and promising, though it may take many years of hard trials and persecutions. "We believe," Brownson writes, "the Church is destined to reap here a glory that she has never reaped in the conversion of any other country, not because the conversion of this country is more easy than that of others, but because it is more difficult. It was easier to convert the Roman empire than it is to convert the American republic, and it took the Church six centuries to complete that; it is easier to convert Great Britain than the United States, for her people have more of the habit of obedience, subordination, submission, and retain a stronger attachment to religion. There is scarcely a trait in the American character as practically developed that is

Digitized by Google

not more or less hostile to Catholicity. Our people are imbued with a spirit of independence, an aversion to authority, a pride, an overweening conceit, as well as with a prejudice, that makes them revolt at the bare mention of the Church. In dealing with them the Church has and can have no extrinsic aid. She has to address them as individuals,* and can hope nothing any further than she can convince the individual reason and win the individual heart. Her success here she must owe to herself alone, to her own intrinsic power and excellence. This is no reason why the Catholic should despair of the conversion of the country, or make no exertions to effect it. The post of difficulty and danger is precisely the post the true Catholic chooses. Notwithstanding the difficulty of the task, we believe the Church is able to accomplish it, and in doing so acquire a glory greater than she acquired in converting the Roman empire" (l. c., vol. xiv. 570, 571).

CHAPTER II.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION.

§ 19.

Its Nature and Necessity. Preparation.

1. In Baptism spiritual life is infused into the soul; this life is developed into a supernatural manliness by the Sacrament of Confirmation. *Vitam spiritualem homo accipit quasi quandam perfectam aetatem spiritualis vitae*

* "Conversions are not usually made in groups or battalions, but individually; and the reason is obvious. Every man is a world in himself. He has habits of thought, mental capacity, passions, prejudices, and temptations peculiar to himself, so that a chain of argument that would carry conviction to one hearer might exert no influence whatever on another" (Cardinal Gibbons, *The Ambassador of Christ*, p. 368).

Digitized by Google

(St. Thomas, iii. qu. 72, art. 1). The baptized person receives in Confirmation the necessary courage to profess the faith of Christ openly and joyfully, and sufficient strength to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to cope with all the vexations and difficulties which beset the pathway of human life. *Per spiritum enim sanctum hujus sacramenti munere in corda nostra illabentem, adest profecto coeleste robur ac praesidium, quo magis magisque sincero corde credamus ad justitiam, fidemque nostram intrepide ac libera voce profiteamur ad salutem. Tanta scilicet est hujus sacramenti vis ac virtus, ut homo Christianus eo munitus non solum mundi minas et illecebras contemnere, sed vel ipsam mortem et corporis cruciatus pro fide tuenda bono libentique animo tolerare posset* (Conc. Balt. II. n. 247).

2. Theologians clearly indicate what belongs to the matter and form of Confirmation, and who can administer it ordinarily and extraordinarily (cf. Sabetti, *Theologia Moralis*, tract. xiii.). The ceremonies of the Pontifical, even the general imposition of hands and the last blessing, are not essential to the valid reception of the sacrament. If any one came to church after the general imposition of hands, and left before the bishop imparted the last blessing of the ceremonial, he would be validly confirmed. But the priest should insist that all remain in church from beginning to end.

3. Confirmation is not necessary *necessitate medii*, and, according to some distinguished theologians, not even *necessitate praecepti graviter obligantis;* but it is necessary, as St. Thomas teaches, *necessitate integritatis et perfectionis.* The priest is obliged to see that young people are confirmed in due season. Those who live and die without being confirmed lose much grace in this world, and are deprived of a higher degree of glory in the next. The priest should request the bishop to appoint a day for Confirmation. Ac-

Digitized by Google

cording to the Third Council of Baltimore, the bishop is bound to visit his whole diocese every three years. The day of the bishop's coming must be publicly announced to the people, and parents and guardians must be requested to send the children of the proper age to the instructions. If there be any grown people in the parish who have not as yet been confirmed, they should be invited to profit of this occasion, which might be the last one in their life. Explain to the people how foolish it would be to neglect Confirmation through false shame. Show them also how easily it could have happened that some had really no opportunity before of being confirmed. Declare yourself ready to give private instructions to adults, and do not force them to come with the children.

4. Teach the *confirmandi* that a most careful preparation is required for the advent of the Holy Ghost in Confirmation. They must be in the state of grace. They should go to confession so as to receive holy communion on the same day, or, if this be impossible, on the day previous to Confirmation. Should it happen that any one commit a mortal sin between holy communion and Confirmation, an act of perfect contrition would suffice. It might be practical to mention this in the instructions preceding Confirmation. In their exterior they must appear neat and clean, and show by their deportment a sincere respect for this sacrament. It is not to be recommended to have First Communion and Confirmation on the same day. The crowding together of two great acts would not make the desirable impressions on young hearts.

5. In country places, where the people seldom see their bishop, everything necessary should be done to make each episcopal visit memorable and wholesome in its influence on the entire population. Receive your bishop as you would receive the Lord Himself. Speak to the people of the sublime dignity of the bishop, who is the representative of the

Digitized by Google

Holy Father, and as such is their highest authority in spiritual matters. *In medio Ecclesiae aperiet os ejus, et adimplebit illum spiritu sapientiae* (Ecclus. xv. 5). Tell them to listen to his words as to the words of God. Make them turn out in full force to greet their chief pastor and give him a warm and princely welcome. If the people have any special local customs for the reception of a bishop, as for instance, a band of music, addresses, ringing of bells, firing of cannon, do not prevent them from expressing their joy and respect in their own peculiar ways unless the bishop himself seriously objects. Let the little children come to see the bishop and receive his blessing. Such an event never fades from their memory. Whatever you do to honor your bishop redounds to your own honor. When the people realize that you love and respect your bishop, they will also realize your own strong support in the very same authority. Try everything to make the bishop's stay with you as pleasant as possible. Do not trouble him with personal grievances or complaints about small revenues. If you have cares and anxieties, remember that "he has the cares of all the churches." Complaints from all sides are his daily bread. Let the day he spends with you be to him a day of relaxation and spiritual comfort, and to you the assurance that you have his blessing and good-will.

CHAPTER III.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

§ 20.

The Emmanuel.

1. He who created the human soul with its constant desire for happiness needs must still this longing, as He made nothing useless or in vain. His divine Son came

Digitized by Google

from heaven to satisfy the legitimate cravings of our hearts; for nothing but Himself, His own presence, can fill the aching void within us. Mortal eyes, however, could not bear the brightness of His majesty nor would the lustre of His divinity be reconcilable with the condition of our fallen nature and the necessity of penance and preparation. We are to walk and work by the light of faith, and thus merit to see Him face to face. *Beati qui non viderunt, et crediderunt* (John xx. 29). And yet His infinite love has found the way to connect the infinite distance between God and the creature. The Blessed Sacrament is the suspension-bridge between heaven and earth. Forty days after His resurrection our divine Lord left the earth and entered into the glory of His Father, and yet we firmly believe that He still remains on earth in the Holy Eucharist, "really, truly, and substantially," as the Council of Trent defines it, as God and Man, with soul and body; and He will continue to abide with us until the consummation of time. Wherefore He is fitly called *Emmanuel*, the "God with us."

2. The Holy Eucharist is the greatest gift of God to man, and, by another act of divine condescension, it is the greatest gift which man can offer to God. Theologians call this sacrament the mirror of the wisdom of God, the abridgment of all His wonders, the fountain of grace, and the magnet of souls. The other sacraments confer grace; this sacrament contains, or rather *is*, the author of grace. It is indeed the crown and perfection of all the sacraments. But the Emmanuel is truly a hidden God, more so in the Eucharist than at Bethlehem and on Calvary.

In cruce latebat sola Deitas,
Sed hic latet simul et humanitas.

All is covered with deepest mystery. God Himself is "inexplicably shrouded under veils so delicate the summer

Digitized by Google

breeze could blow them aside, and so impenetrable that angel's ken cannot pierce them, nor the weight of a falling world force them open" (Father Faber, *The Blessed Sacrament*). And yet He is there, the Saviour of the world, the Man-God Jesus, the Judge of the living and the dead, and from His eucharistic throne He directs and shapes all in His Church for the weal of souls and the glory of His Father. He lives in the midst of His people, the *Pastor bonus;* He is ever nigh to them, and their ears hear His voice and feel secure in His presence.

3. With the Holy Eucharist Christ instituted the priesthood, or to say it more correctly, the priesthood is a necessary consequence of the Holy Eucharist. The highest and sublimest power the priest possesses is the power over the real body of Christ; his power over Christ's mystic body, the faithful, is only a development of the eucharistic power. Moreover, all the honor due to him as a priest and all the respect which people have for him are rooted in the Blessed Eucharist. "The sacred character," Cardinal Wiseman says, "which the Catholic priest possesses in the estimation of his flock, the power of blessing with which he seems invested, are both the result of that familiarity with which in the holy mysteries he is allowed to approach his Lord" (Lecture xvi.). Even the priest's right and title to his support on the part of the people are based on the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist. *Qui altari deserviunt, cum altari participant* (1 Cor. ix. 13). Here is also the source of his priestly strength, purity, and sanctity.* *O sac-*

*Der Hirte wird ein guter Hirte sein, in dessen Leben und Wirken dieses heilige Geheimniss wie verborgenes Feuer durchleuchtet. Hier ist der Mittelpunkt seines Gebetes, und in den Chor der Priester sich einfügend, betet er mit ihnen um dasselbe geschart sein Officium. Hier ist die Quelle für die Reinheit des Priestertums; den Altar umgiebt der Chor der Jungfrauen, die dem Lamme folgen, wohin es geht, und in diesen Chor mischt sich der Priester, und dem Geheimnisse zu Liebe kämpft er freudig wider die Versuchungen, so oft und drängend sie ihm

Digitized by Google

ramentum pietatis! O signum unitatis! O vinculum charitatis! (St. Aug., *Tract. xxvi. in Joan.*)

4. There is no spot on earth so holy and dear to the heart of the priest as the altar of the Lord, "the place where His glory dwelleth" (Ps. xxv. 8). His thoughts and affections should hover around it like bees about a bed of flowers. Here is the object of his love and life, his own dear Master, who is ever thinking of him, who is present chiefly for his sake and on his account, who inspires him with all the noble plans for the good of others, who advises and corrects him, who consoles him in every trial and anxiety, who compensates him for the loss of parents and friends and country, who makes his life one continual spring-time of hope and promise, who guards him against the despondencies of declining age and keeps him in perpetual youth. *Introibo ad altare Dei, ad Deum, qui laetificat juventutem meam* (Ps. xlii. 4). Wherever the priest is, there is the Emmanuel. He is with him on the loneliest missions as in the crowded cities; His love shines upon him always and everywhere. Oh, if we but realize this truth! It has been revealed to saints of modern times that if the priest knew how his divine Master loves him, he would die at the altar for excessive happiness.

5. Great was the longing of the Royal Singer for the tabernacle of the Lord, and yet it was only the figure, the

auch nahen mögen; hier ist der Mittelpunkt seiner Sorgen wie seiner Freuden; dass dieses Geheimniss seine Kraft ausübe an der Gemeinde, das ist Gegenstand seiner Sorge: und wenn er sieht, wie sich die Gemeinde gern und andachtsvoll um den Altar des Herrn und den Tisch der Gnaden drängt, wird sein Herz freudig gestimmt. Hier ist der Mittelpunkt seines Opferlebens: ihm zu Liebe wohnt der Priester einsam und doch thätig, am lauten Tage und wenn es sein muss in der Stille der Nacht bei ihm, vom Volke geschieden; er trägt freudig und geduldig die Widersprüche, die ihm oft in seiner pastorellen Thätigkeit begegnen, mit einem Worte: Hier findet der treue Hirte das erhabene Motiv seines sittlichen Lebens, als ein lebendiger Zeuge des Geheimnisses, das auf dem Altare thront (Dr. Renninger, *Pastoraltheologie*, § 32).

Digitized by Google

shadow of what was to come. How intense should be the priest's desire to be near the altar of Jesus, whose "presence diffuses sweetness and tranquillity and chastity over the heart." How he should turn to it frequently during the day when near, and sigh for it when away from it! *Quia melior est dies una in atriis tuis super millia* (Ps. lxxxiii. 11). The altar must be the principal object of his devout attention and anxious care. Nothing can be too beautiful for the altar; it is the throne of Jesus Christ. *Quid est enim altare, nisi sedes et corporis et sanguinis Christi?* (Optat. Milvet. *De Schim. Donat.*) The priest is the custodian of the Adorable Sacrament, the keeper of the Lord's body. His vigilance concerning the altar will prove his faithfulness as a watchman. *Externo obsequio Sanctissimum Sacramentum in ecclesiis, in quibus servatur, coli facile potest et omnino debet. Sacerdotes itaque, qui tanti pignoris custodes a Domino sunt constituti, nihil omnino omittant, quo munus honorificentissimum ipsis demandatum pie et rite exequantur, atque omnia quae ea de re Ecclesia praecipit, accuratissime serventur* (Conc. Balt. II. n. 265).

6. The centre and life of the altar is the tabernacle, the *Shechinah* of the new covenant. Here the sacred species, and nothing else, are reverently kept on a corporal, which should be changed frequently in order to keep it neat and white. *Tabernaculum regulariter debet esse ligneum, extra deauratum, intus vero aliquo panno serico decenter contectum* (cf. Conc. Balt. II. n. 266). A great number of tabernacles in the United States, even in poor churches, are of iron, but having the interior lined with wood against moisture. The same should be done with tabernacles of marble, brass, silver, and any other precious metal. The door should be of special elegance and splendor, typifying the golden gates of heaven. Nothing should be on the tabernacle except a large movable cross; it is

Digitized by Google

strictly forbidden to have anything else on it or before it. *Consuetudinem illi "superimponendi sacras reliquias (etiam Sanctissimae Crucis, vel Instrumenta Dominicae Passionis), pictasque imagines, ita ut tabernaculum pro basi inserviat," dum in eo servatur Sanctissimum, improbavit S. Rituum Congregatio, neque posse vasa florum, vel quid simile ante ostiolum retineri, edixit* (Conc. Balt. II. l. c.). The tabernacle must be constantly locked with a key that should be gilt or plated. It is highly recommended to have always two keys for the tabernacle. Nobody but the priest in charge of the church can have the custody of the key. You cannot leave it in a drawer of the vestment-press unless that drawer be locked and the key of it in your hands.* Never let the key remain in the lock of the tabernacle after Mass. A pious crank told me how he "helped himself" to holy communion in a church where he saw the key in the tabernacle.

7. Before the tabernacle which contains the Blessed Sacrament a lamp is to be kept burning day and night to mark the presence of Him who is the *lux vera, quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum.* "This light, ever burning—burning through the darkness, the silence, and the solitude of night; burning in the glare of the most sunny day, in the most crowded service—most aptly represents the unceasing homage wherewith the Lord of glory should be greeted in that His dwelling—that untiring, unfailing worship which the heart should pay Him for 'mercy which endureth forever.' That watchful lamp seems to do our duty, and represent our affections, ever glowing, ever bright, in cheerful devotion. It is symbolical, too, of the ever-wakeful homage of the

* I once caught in the vestry a young fellow, who was somewhat mentally deranged, opening the different drawers of the vestment-case and looking, as he told me, for the key of the tabernacle, as he wished to see what was in it.

Digitized by Google

celestial host, who, with unclosing eye and restless tongue watch and give praise before the shrine, as before the throne of the Lamb. And it forms, moreover, a just analogy with the enjoined mark of respect in the Old Law, where the golden candlestick was commanded ever to burn before the entrance of the Holy of Holies" (Cardinal Wiseman, *Essays*, i. 534). The priest is personally responsible for the sanctuary light. He cannot leave the charge of it exclusively to the sexton or some other person living near the church. He should see that the oil of olives he uses be pure, so that the lamp may burn all night. If a substitute for oil of olives be allowed, it should be, if possible, a vegetable oil, so as to retain the significance of oil as *lux*, *cibus*, *medicina*, according to St. Bernard (*Off. in festo S. S. Nominis*). But in case of necessity the bishop may permit the use of kerosene oil. The poverty of a place, however, is not admitted as an excuse to dispense with the sanctuary lamp: *Instituatur quaestor vel eleemosynarum collector* (S. Congr. Ep. March 14, 1614). The Second Council of Baltimore passed a special decree for the lamp: *Coram Sanctissimo lampas semper accensa habeatur, ex oleo olivarum nutrita, vel saltem "ex aliis oleis quantum fieri possit vegetabilibus;" nec citra veram necessitatem privilegio utendum, si quod fuerit concessum, Illud sine lumine retinendi* (No. 267). In case where the priest lives too far away from the church or where there is no church, and where he has permission to keep the Blessed Sacrament in his house, he should always keep a light burning before it, and thus testify his grateful reverence to Him who condescends to dwell with His servant under the same roof and who will bless his house even more than He blessed the house of Obededom (1 Paralip. xiii. 14). We feel shy in recommending an eight-day lamp, except in case where the priest could not attend to or watch the trimming of the lamp. The little

Digitized by Google

light is often, in country places especially, the only companion our dear Lord has during the whole day. The necessity of looking after the light will bring at least one human being near Him. Pius IX., who undoubtedly had plenty of work to be constantly occupied, found time to keep the light in his chapel from ever being extinguished.

8. Our Lord instituted the sacrament of His love in a permanent form, which permits us to possess Him and to approach Him at all times. From the tabernacle He repeats those blessed words with the same reality and vividness as He addressed them to the people of Judea nearly nineteen centuries ago: *Venite ad me, omnes qui laboratis, et onerati estis, et ego reficiam vos* (Matt. xi. 28). It is one of the most sacred duties of the priest to foster in the hearts of the faithful a strong devotion to the Blessed Sacrament by frequent visits to the same. The Fathers of the Second Baltimore Council urged this duty in the following impressive words: *Maxime tandem in votis habemus, ut fideles doceantur bona quamplurima ipsis obventura, si Dominum sub speciebus sacramentalibus inter nos hospitem saepius invisant. Pastoris ergo munus erit, et verbis et exemplo ad hoc pientissimum officium suos incitare, atque hac ratione in omnium cordibus ignem amoris accendere et fovere erga amantissimum Servatorem, "quoniam magnifice fecit, quia magnus in medio nostri Sanctus Israel"* (No. 269). By word and example the priest should lead the people to the Blessed Sacrament. In sermons, instructions, and in catechising he should often speak of the real presence of God's eternal Son in our very midst, and of the forgetfulness of many who do not seem to appreciate the nearness of their blessed Saviour. He never need fear of exaggerating this devotion, as it may happen with some modern devotions to shrines and miraculous places. "Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament," as Father Faber truly remarks, "is the queen of all devotions. It is the central

Digitized by Google

devotion of the Church. All others gather round it, and group themselves there as satellites: for others celebrate His mysteries; this is Himself." And certainly to Himself who is infinite there can be no excess of praise and adoration.* The good priest will set the example of frequently visiting the Blessed Sacrament. He will not content himself with visiting his church for the celebration of the holy mysteries or the administration of the sacraments, but he will daily come to his divine Master to pay Him court, to plead with Him for himself and his people, and to draw down on his works the approval and blessing of the Man-God. By becoming a member of the "American Eucharistic League" he will impose some sweet obligations on himself in relation to the Adorable Sacrament, which will bring him nearer to it. Some priests of my own acquaintance say a part of their daily office in church before the altar, and they could not find a more suitable place, *ut digne, attente et devote officium recitent.* No priest should lie down to rest at night without bidding "good-night" to the gentle Master who watches while the servant is asleep, without asking His forgiveness for "the failures and inconsistencies of the day and His divine blessing for the night."

9. Cardinal Wiseman has left us the most beautiful de-

* "The Blessed Sacrament is everything to us. We have our dearest Lord with us; what care we for aught else? Darkness is only pleasant shade when He is nigh. Disquietudes are worth their pains, for the extreme sweetness of having His gentle hand to smooth them down. Difficulties were desirable to go through, if it were only to see Him come forth, the sun of truth, and illuminate all things with so sudden and so radiant a beauty. Then the repose of it all is so wonderful! For it is there, at the door of the tabernacle, that we find our true place in creation, that our pride is tamed while our wounds are being dressed and healed, and our restlessness is made ashamed while it is rebuked by that voiceless love. What we guessed at and doubted heretofore, now we feel, we touch, we taste, we know. . . . In a word, to have God so given up to us, to be with us, and to be ours, as He is in the Blessed Sacrament, is our all in all" (Father Faber, *The Blessed Sacrament*).

Digitized by Google

scription in the English language of what we are to understand by the familiar expression "a visit to the Blessed Sacrament" and of the effects of this principal devotion on the Christian heart. "It declares at once the simple, hearty, practical belief in the Real Presence: not a vague, surmising opinion; not an uncertain hope that the Lord of glory may be there; but a plain conviction that, as surely as a king dwells in his palace and may there be found by those who are privileged to enter in; or rather, that as certainly as He Himself dwelt once in a stable, making it His first palace upon earth, and was there *visited* by kings from a distance and by shepherds from the neighborhood; that as truly as He abode in the houses of His friends, and was *visited* by Nicodemus for instruction or by Magdalen for pardon—so really does He now dwell amongst us, in such a sort as that we may similarly come before Him and have recourse to Him in our wants. Nothing short of the liveliest faith in the mystery could have introduced or kept up this practice. But the term is likewise the offspring and expression of love. It implies a certain intimacy, if one may use so homely a term, with Him to whom it is applied. It gets us beyond the dark regions of awe into those of glowing affection; it raises us up above the crouching attitude of Israel's children at the mountain's base—nay, carries us straight through the clouds and lightnings at its side to the silent radiant summit, where God and man meet face to face and discourse together as friends are wont to do. Yes; chamber devotion is doubtless good; the still domestic oratory at home, with its little tokens of loving piety hung around it,—trophies often from a holier land,—is very composing, soothing, and devout. But the great and generous thoughts of Catholic heroism are conceived, or rather inspired, at the altar where the Adorable Sacrament reposes; there, depend upon it, in silent prayer the noble damsel in heart rejects the world

Digitized by Google

and its vanities, and plights her troth to the Spouse of her chaste heart; there the young ecclesiastic, bowing in meditation calm and sweet, muses on the triumphs of his schoolmates over the swords and red-hot pincers of Tonquin, and resolves to share their crown of martyrdom; there whatever is planned for the Church of God that requires earnest zeal and persevering energy is matured and resolved. And there, too, is the heart unburdened of its daily load of sin and sorrow, anxiety and distress, with a fulness of feeling that comes not elsewhere; sacrifices seem easy which in any other place would be hard; and the Catholic soon learns to feel and utter those words which are there most applicable: *Etenim passer invenit sibi domum, et turtur nidum sibi . . . altaria Tua, Domine virtutum, Rex meus, et Deus meus* (Ps. lxxxiii. 4)." (*Essays on Various Subjects*, i. 481, 482.) To offer the people this blessing and consolation of visiting our dear Lord, the doors of the church should be open at all hours of the day. Fear of sacrilegious robbery is no reason for keeping a church locked up continually. Our Lord is willing to risk irreverences and profanities for the sake of those who truly love Him and desire to gather around Him in silent adoration. A Catholic church is not like a Protestant meeting-house, where people assemble to pray and sing, to entertain and be entertained. It would seem useless, even ridiculous, to keep a Protestant church open on week-days.* A Catholic church is verily the house of God.

* The following curious item appeared a few years ago in the Providence *Journal*, expressing the view of an intelligent Protestant on this matter: "Thursday, a Boston drummer, who is devout, an admirer of sacred architecture, and an organist, stepped into the Catholic cathedral, and sat for a long time enjoying with reverent pleasure the beautiful paintings, the costly, rich, and artistic interior of the edifice. Women and men, inclined to meditation and to prayer, were constantly passing in and out, engaged meanwhile in their devotions. After leaving the cathedral the drummer crossed over on to another street, and walking west came to a big brick church with a tall spire, belonging to another

Digitized by Google

Vere non est hic aliud nisi domus Dei et porta coeli (Gen. xxviii. 17). In cities, and in country places where priests and people live near the church, the doors should remain open from early morning (five o'clock) until late in the evening (nine o'clock), to enable the working-people, who generally form the most devout portion of our parishes, to enter the church and converse with the good Master and receive His divine blessing.

§ 21.

On His Throne.

1. The Church is not satisfied with opening her sanctuaries all day and inviting the faithful to visit the Emmanuel, but she withdraws the veil of the tabernacle, she lifts the curtain of the sacred tent, and exposes the adorable Host for public veneration, under certain rites and solemnities. *Quod fit*, says the Second Baltimore Council, *ut Filio Dei solemnes honores summusque cultus coram omnibus red-*

denomination. The door was open and he dropped in here also. The church was apparently deserted. He sat down in one of the rear pews, mentally measured the organ, the interior dimensions of the auditorium, admired the kalsomining, and concluded by passing some criticisms upon the architecture, thinking that the church should be about one-third longer to make the proportions right, and that the organ should project farther into the church. After he had satisfied his eye and his soul he left, and as he was passing through the vestibule a tall, elderly gentleman, wearing a white hat and a long, curling beard, who looked as though he owned the church, came down-stairs. 'What are you doing here?' inquired the man upon the stairs, eying first the Bostonian and then his sample case. 'I stepped in a moment to see the church,' replied the drummer; 'I hope I have done no harm.' 'I don't know about that,' continued the elderly gentleman; 'this is not a hotel to run in and out of.' 'When we go about we like to go into churches and see them,' was the stranger's answer. 'Well, this isn't a place for curiosity-seekers.' 'I am sorry you feel so about your church,' said the Boston man, 'and are not more hospitable.' The commercial traveller walked away, musing on the different methods for winning souls."

Digitized by Google

dantur, animique adstantium in ejus amorem incendantur atque inflammentur (No. 374). In America especially, *Benediction* with the Blessed Sacrament is regarded as a public profession of faith in the real presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, in the face of so many heretics and infidels who ignore and even despise His infinite love shown in this sacrament. And yet this public devotion to the Blessed Sacrament is calculated to inspire true piety and to draw down blessings on Catholics and non-Catholics. The words of Cardinal Wiseman in reference to England are equally true of America: "We know places where several conversions are attributable to its solemn celebration; and others where not a little has been effected by it, towards exciting a thoroughly Catholic spirit, and keeping fervor alive" (*Essays*, i. 494).

2. *Tantum ergo sacramentum veneremur cernui.* It is impossible to express in words what showers of grace Our Lord pours upon those who kneel at His feet at Benediction. In one of his visions St. Philip Neri beheld our divine Saviour at Exposition blessing the kneeling crowd, "as if it were the natural attitude and customary occupation of His goodness in the Blessed Sacrament" (Faber). What a happy moment in life, the moment of Benediction! A peaceful tenderness steals over the heart: He is so near and so loving. *O quam suavis est, Domine, spiritus tuus!* Benediction is generally given at the close of day, when its labors are over—when the body is languishing and the spirit needs refreshment. "What a soothing, delightful end to a day of toil and anxiety! How reconciled to its pains does one feel through it; and how prepared for the duties of home does one hasten from it!" (Cardinal Wiseman, l. c.)

3. The Second Council of Baltimore gives a long list of days on which it is permitted to give Benediction (n. 375); but it prudently adds: *Omnes autem monemus et adhorta-*

Digitized by Google

mur, ne quid praetermittant, quod juxta rubricas et rerum adjuncta ad debitae reverentiae significationem requiratur, siquidem multo melius est, ut non ita frequenter exponatur, et tunc cum debita reverentia, quam ut frequentius et sine debito obsequio id fiat. Where the priest has not the necessary vestments or sacred vessels for Benediction; where he cannot have a server for the incense, or even one singer, he should not attempt to have the *solemn* rite. Benediction also supposes the presence of a respectable number of worshippers. It would not be advisable to expose the Blessed Sacrament frequently and *pompa quadam* for a few school-children, or a handful of pious old ladies, but only when a passable number of people from the congregation can assist. The priest should often explain the importance and meaning of this solemn ceremony, and thus religiously educate the people, in places where Benediction is not well attended. If they once realize what Our Lord desires to impart to them, they will eagerly and gratefully avail themselves of His benefits.

4. A most popular devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, which was received with universal joy by all the Catholics of America at its very introduction, is the *Forty Hours' Devotion.* Priests and people vie with each other in neglecting no pains and in sparing no expense to make this solemn devotion as glorious as possible. The altars are adorned with numerous candles and choicest flowers, and the throne of Christ is set up with as much pomp and dignity as devout love only can devise it. Nearly every adult in the congregation wishes to approach holy communion and to gain the several indulgences attached to the Forty Hours' Devotion. Priests from the neighboring missions are most willing to assist in hearing confessions until late in the night and to return to the sacred tribunal at an early hour of the following morning. And wherever they seriously engage in their sacred duties out of love

Digitized by Google

and reverence for the Blessed Sacrament, and not look upon it as a sort of a clerical picnic or an occasional rendezvous for feasting and card-playing, there the effect of a Forty Hours' Devotion on the people is almost equal to that of a mission.

5. This devotion, first instituted at Milan, was introduced into Rome through St. Philip Neri's exertions, and was inaugurated in 1592 by Pope Clement VIII. Succeeding Popes issued rules and decrees which were collected under Clement XI. and published in 1705 as the "Instructio Clementina." This instruction was promulgated by Clement XII. in 1730. Schneider gives the text with brief but practical notes in his *Manuale Sacerdotum*. The Fathers of the Second Baltimore Council order the use of the Baltimore *Ceremonial for the United States*, in the carrying out of the various ceremonies of the Exposition.* The priest must see that a sufficient number of adorers be constantly before the Blessed Sacrament. It is advisable to appoint the members of the various church societies for different hours. A list of adorers, hung up on or near the church door, will be conducive to regularity. If boys are appointed for adoration, half an hour will amply suffice for juvenile devotion; one hour would be excruciating for them.†

* The indefatigable editor of the *American Ecclesiastical Review* has rendered the priests of America an invaluable service by publishing a handy, correct, and cheap *Manual of the Forty Hours' Adoration*, which contains all the necessary directions and rubrics, together with the prescribed prayers and chants.

† Cardinal Wiseman, when introducing the Forty Hours' Adoration into England in 1849, wrote a beautiful Pastoral Letter, from which we extract the following passages, suggestive of rich ideas and devout feelings for the priestly soul and helpful in kindling devotion in the hearts of his people:

"It is not your Saviour, 'as the hidden Manna' (Apoc. ii. 17) of which you partake, that you have here to reverence and love: it is your Lord, your God, triumphant over death for you, yet shrouding from you His overpowering glory, to whom you have to pay your open and solemn homage;—not enshrined in His poor tabernacle, where, because unseen,

Digitized by Google

§ 22.

Holy Communion.

1. PERFECTION consists in union with God. The highest and closest union attainable on this side of the grave is the receiving of the body and blood of Christ in the adorable Eucharist. *Qui manducat meam carnem, et bibit*

He is often unhonored; but enthroned, as in heaven, above His own altar, Lord of His own sanctuary, centre of all surrounding splendor, challenging with love deep adoration. Around Him shall flame the hallowed tapers, by whose pure ray the Church symbolizes, however feebly, the bright spirits that shine around His heavenly throne. At His feet earth shall scatter its choicest flowers, as its grateful tribute to Him that bloomed so fair from Jesse's root (Is. xi. 1). On all sides shall be arrayed whatever of richness and splendor our poverty can collect, to adorn the chosen abode of Him who hath said, 'the silver is mine and the gold is mine' (Aggeus ii. 9), and does not disdain any manifestation of our reverence. Hasten then, dearly beloved, to bring whatever may be necessary to enrich the solemnity of that happy day when your Lord, in His kingly progress, shall visit your own temple, saying, 'I will fill *this* house with glory' (ibid. 8), and, whether it be splendid or lowly, shall there abide in special state. Give proof to all that come there to visit Him that you prize, you cherish, you love this privilege which He bestows; and that, like Solomon and the people of Israel, you have 'gladly offered all these things' (1 Paral. xxix. 17) which are requisite to its becoming, and even splendid, enjoyment. And 'presently the Lord whom you seek, and the Angel of the testament whom you desire, shall come to His temple' (Malach. iii. 1).

"Oh! then, go forth with joyful hearts to meet and welcome Him; and leave Him not alone, so long as He shall condescend to dwell in the midst of you. From that lofty mercy-seat whereon He hath been placed; from that bright radiance in the midst of which, as a peerless and priceless gem, He hath been set—beauty Himself, essential Light, and matchless Splendor—there go forth on every side, not scorching rays of glory, not burning shafts of might, but a mild and constant flow of holiness and grace, which fills the entire space from roof to pavement with the very breath and air of heaven. Silent and soft, as wave impelling wave of fragrance, goes forth, and diffuses itself around, that savor of sweetness, that balm of life, that virtue which, emanating from the sacred humanity of Jesus upon earth, healed all diseases (Luke viii. 46). And from the threshold of this His palace now, no less than His temple, it will pass abroad and spread itself on all sides, till it reach your dwell-

Digitized by Google

meum sanguinem, in me manet, et ego in illo (John vi. 57). God in His omnipotence could not give us more than He gives us in holy communion. With His divine Son He communicates to us grace and merit without measure or bounds. From Him flows the sap of divine life into our souls, vivifying us and uniting us with the Father. *Sicut misit me vivens Pater, et ego vivo propter Patrem, et qui manducat me, et ipse vivet propter me* (l. c. 58).

ings; and, more powerful than that blessing which the Ark of the Covenant (type, whereof you now possess the reality) shed over the house of Obededom (2 Kings vi. 12), it will impart to them peace and grace, and welfare spiritual and temporal. 'I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts... and in this place I will give peace, said the Lord of hosts' (Ag. ii. 8, 10).

"But now it is that you will practise that angelic worship, lost and unknown out of the Catholic Church—the worship of pure adoration. For beyond her pale men may praise God or address Him, or perform other religious acts, but they cannot know nor make that special homage which His presence, as we possess it, inspires; when, without word spoken, or sound uttered, or act performed, the soul sinks prostrate, and annihilates itself before Him, casts all its powers, and gifts, and brightest ornaments, as worthless oblations, before His altar, and subjects its entire being as a victim to His sole adorable will. When first, then, you approach the place where He is solemnly worshipped, as you humbly bend your knees and bow your heads, let this deep and silent adoration be your first act. Speak not in words, forget all selfish thoughts, repress even all eager longings of your hearts, and receive the benediction of your mighty Lord in solemn stillness; while you, reputing yourselves but dust and ashes at His feet, a nothingness before Him, tender Him the homage of loyal vassals, humbled as the clay before the potter (Is. xxix. 16), as the creature before its God. Then raise up your eyes, those keen eyes of faith, which, through the veil of sacramental elements, see, as John did 'in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, one like to the Son of man,' Apoc. i. 13; yea, the adorable Jesus, the King of your souls, and there feast long your sight upon that sacred humanity which love hath given Him, and with it kindred and brotherhood, and ties of tenderest affection with you. And now speak to Him, but with outpoured souls, with the unrestrained familiarity of warmest friendship face to face—no longer with the awful Lord, like Moses or Elias on Horeb (Exod. xxxiii. 11; 3 Kings xix. 11), but with them, and Peter, and John on Thabor (Ps. cxxxi. 7), where you see Him radiant with His own light, but mild and inviting love."

Digitized by Google

Holy communion is the pledge of our immortality. Divine life is eternal life. We shall live through Him and with Him, and live forever. *O Sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur; . . . mens impletur gratia, et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.*

2. Holy communion is the most powerful means of sanctifying souls. *Quapropter in hoc praecipue boni pastoris incumbat studium, ut oves esca hac coelesti et divina alantur reficianturque, ut Corpore Domini nutritae Spiritu Ejus vivant* (Conc. Balt. II. 254). Although holy communion is not necessary *necessitate medii*, yet a Christian who has come to the age of discretion is obliged *e praecepto divino* to receive it. *Nisi manducaveritis carnem Filii hominis, et biberitis ejus sanguinem, non habebitis vitam in vobis* (John vi. 54).

3. Priests will practically show their love and reverence for the Blessed Sacrament by preparing the faithful for a proper reception of holy communion. *In eo autem omnem ponant operam, ut fideles digne ad tantum Sacramentum accedant* (Conc. Balt. II. 256). The necessary dispositions are best explained in the Roman Catechism: *Primum illam praeparationem fideles adhibeant, ut discernant mensam a mensa, hanc sacram ab aliis profanis, coelestem hunc panem a communi. Atque hoc fit, cum certo credimus, praesens esse verum corpus et sanguinem Domini, quem in coelo Angeli adorant; ad cujus nutum columnae coeli contremiscunt et pavent* (Job xxvi. 11); *cujus gloria plenum est coelum et terra* (Is. vi. 1, 3). *Hoc nimirum est, dijudicare corpus Domini, quod Apostolus* (1 Cor. xi. 29) *admonuit, cujus tamen mysterii magnitudinem venerari potius oportet, quam in disputationibus ejus veritatem curiosius perquirere* (p. 2, c. iv.). It is chiefly in the confessional that the priest prepares the soul and clothes it with the nuptial garment and fits it to be the living tabernacle of the Son of God.

Digitized by Google

4. Not only for the soul a preparation is required before receiving holy communion, but the body also must be prepared reverently to approach the holy banquet. A natural fast is required from midnight. The communicant must be humble and modest in his exterior bearing. Avoiding vanity in dress and manner, his appearance should be neat and clean, and he should wear his best clothes, if possible. Sometimes communicants wear their ordinary clothes for the first Mass, at which they communicate, and reserve their nice clothes for the High Mass at which they again assist; this should be censured. Hands and face should be carefully washed. Men who shave should allow the razor to smooth the face. Before going to rest on the preceding evening every communicant should rinse his mouth; this may also be done in the morning, provided care be taken not to swallow the water. When the time has arrived to receive the Blessed Sacrament the communicant does not rush up from his place to the railing, but he slowly walks up to it, the hands joined and the eyes cast down. He kneels on both knees on the floor before the railing to adore the Blessed Sacrament. In receiving it, he kneels at the railing and holds the communion-cloth with both hands under the chin, at a little distance from it.* He should keep the face somewhat

* The linen cloth is for the purpose of receiving any particle or fragment which might accidentally fall while the priest is administering the sacrament. It is usually attached to the rails, and is held by the communicant in both hands so as to be extended horizontally under the chin whilst the priest puts the sacred Host in his mouth. The communion-cloth should be washed frequently, at least once a month, so as to be clean and not disgusting or repulsive for use. Preferable to the communion-cloth attached to the rails, and more convenient, is the so-called communion-card, now used in many churches of America. It is a piece of card-board covered with linen, similar to a pall, but much larger. It is presented by the server to the first communicant and by him passed on to the next. The linen cover can be changed every week and thus be kept neat. It is wrong to use the purificator, the chalice-veil, the

Digitized by Google

elevated, with the eyes cast down, and open his mouth in such a manner that the priest, in placing the sacred Host on the tongue, may not be obliged to touch the lips or the teeth. The extremity of the tongue should rest on the lower lip, and not protrude beyond it, nor should the tongue be moved from that position until the priest has withdrawn his hand after placing the sacred particle on it. Whilst advancing the tongue, the communicant should not move his head or throw it as if to snatch the sacred Host, but keep his head perfectly quiet and steady. When the priest has placed the sacred Host on the tongue and has

finger-towel, the burse, the pall, or any part of the priest's vestments for a communion-cloth.

If a particle should fall on the floor, it is reverently taken up and the place washed and scraped. If it falls on the communion-cloth, the spot should be marked and covered with something clean; afterwards it is washed. Should the sacred Host fall inside the dress of a lady, the priest ought to tell her to take it up herself. If it cannot be easily found, the person should withdraw to the sacristy or she should go to the nearest house and search for it. Having found the particle, she should consume it or bring it to the church. If the priest alone notices the fall of a minute particle and has reason to think that a search would be fruitless or would be attended with great inconvenience, he may be silent about the matter and leave it to divine Providence. When there is a great number of communicants there is always reason to apprehend such inconvenience, and therefore in such circumstances it is better not to call attention to the matter. In fact the loss of minute fragments in this way as well as of others that fall unobserved by any one, when there is a great number of communicants, may be looked on as an unavoidable accessory of the mystery itself; and therefore one should not be over anxious about the matter when he has taken the ordinary precautions against irreverence.

In taking each particle, the priest gently shakes his finger and thumb on the edge of the ciborium. He must avoid touching the tongue directly as he places the particle on it, and moistening his fingers. But this is practically impossible when distributing many communions. The fingers will be moistened, and here some rubricists recommend the use of a purificator, distinct from the one used at Mass, on which the priest may dry his fingers after having rubbed them over the ciborium.

The *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* (i. 145) adds: *Il ne faut non plus essuyer ses doigts au purificatoire qu'au besoin, et, le faisant, ne pas séparer le pouce de l'index* (cf. O'Kane's *Notes*, chap. xii.).

Digitized by Google

withdrawn his hand, the communicant slowly withdraws his tongue and slowly shuts his mouth, inclines his head a little and swallows the sacred particle, taking care not to raise the tongue to the palate. Having remained at the communion-table for about the time of a *Pater* and *Ave*, he returns to his place, walking slowly, the hands joined and the eyes cast down, to make his thanksgiving on his knees. He should not spit out for at least a quarter of an hour, nor take any food before that time (cf. *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolan.*, pars iv.). It would be imprudent to propose all these rules to the grown people who perhaps never heard of them, or to insist on their observance. This would keep them away from the holy table. Commence with the children; teach them accurately when they are preparing for First Communion, and make them observe these rules afterwards, without blaming adults who do not follow them. Some will of their own accord imitate the devout example of the children.

5. Every communicant should remain in the church for at least fifteen minutes after communion, and spend this time in thanksgiving. The first few moments should be employed in mental prayer, in sweet and confidential intercourse with the King of our heart, and in pouring out to Him those sublime emotions and holy desires with which the soul is flooded. "It will not do, however," as St. Alphonsus remarks, "to lose this precious time; and if the mind begins to wander, we must fix our attention immediately by means of a prayer-book." Denounce with holy indignation and without mercy the detestable practice of those who, as soon as the Mass at which they receive holy communion is over, leave the church and mix in worldly conversation. Remind them of St. Philip Neri and the lighted candles. When a church society goes to holy communion in a body, then tell the members to remain in their places until you have said some prayers with them.

Digitized by Google

In other words, frequently make a public thanksgiving with the communicants, and they will soon acquire a good habit. You must set the good example of making a proper thanksgiving after Mass. If some persons are waiting to go to confession, to offer intentions, to announce an ordinary sick call, to ask a necessary question, let them wait until you have first spoken to the Lord in thanksgiving. They will understand it. It may happen occasionally that a person cannot wait, but must see the priest without delay. In such a case the Lord will be satisfied with our good intention; but it rarely happens that a priest has no chance whatever to make even a brief thanksgiving. As a rule, do not open your lips to speak, except in prayer to God, for a quarter of an hour at least after you lay down the vestments. In observing this rule you will edify the people, who will follow your example, and the divine Master will be pleased with His servant, and enable him to perform acceptably the duties of his priestly office. "Thanksgivings after Mass would be the completest, the speediest, and the most successful reform of the clergy, while they would also enable the laity either to communicate more frequently, or to profit more by their frequent communion" (Faber's *All for Jesus*).

6. It is the ardent desire of the Church that her children approach holy communion frequently. Our divine Lord would be displeased with us if we prevented Him from coming often into hearts He loves tenderly. The priest must use his efforts to increase every year the number of monthly, weekly, and daily communicants in his congregation. All should be urged to go to holy communion every month, especially men of the world who are surrounded by many dangers. Monthly communion appears necessary to keep worldly people from falling into mortal sin. "Take the whole mass of unmarried people, and of all those who are tempted to intemperance, and to the vio-

Digitized by Google

lence of temper which vents itself in cursing and swearing, and there are very few, if even one, whose perseverance in the state of grace you can have a hope of, if they remain away six months from the sacraments. Then the greater part of their lives is spent at enmity with God. They fall in about a month after their communion—sooner, perhaps, on account of their habitual weakness, and the rest of their time their souls are rotting in mortal sin" (Bishop Moriarty, *Allocutions*). We should induce the bulk of the people to come on all the great feasts of the Church, which is equivalent to monthly communion. *Omnem itaque operam in eo ponant, ut ad sacram Mensam crebro Christi fideles accedant, praesertim vero iis festis diebus, quos solemniori cum pompa Ecclesia celebrare consuevit. Nihil enim hominibus utilius, nihil amantissimo Domino jucundius fieri potest, quam si ad "coenam magnam," ex divitiis Ejus amoris paratam, omnes vocati, quin ullam praetendant excusationem, laeti veniant* (Conc. Balt. II. 259). And who can describe the holy joy which fills the heart of the good priest when he sees a large number of his people approaching to receive from his anointed hands the adorable body of Christ?

7. In every congregation a considerable number of men and women may be gradually prepared to receive holy communion every week. The confessor has the exclusive right to judge about the frequency of holy communion. Even daily communion may be permitted to some chosen souls that have the necessary spiritual qualities required by theologians. Everywhere such pious souls are found who live free from every deliberate venial sin and are rich in virtue. However, a priest must be exceedingly prudent and not hastily grant permission to communicate very frequently unless he is morally convinced of their sincere piety and knows them outside the confessional as leading an exemplary Christian life. Daily communion is in accordance

Digitized by Google

with the express wish of the Church. The Council of Trent says: *Optaret quidem Sacrosancta Synodus, ut in singulis missis fideles adstantes non solum spirituali affectu, sed sacramentali etiam Eucharistiae perceptione communicarent* (sess. xxii. c. 6). The Roman Catechism faithfully expounds the doctrine of the Church in the following instructive words: *Est S. Augustini norma certissima, "sic vive, ut quotidie possis sumere." Quare parochi partes erunt fideles crebro adhortari, ut, quemadmodum corpori in singulos dies alimentum subministrare necessarium putant, ita etiam quotidie hoc sacramento alendae et nutriendae animae curam non abjiciant. Neque enim minus spirituali cibo anima, quam naturali corpus indigere, perspicuum est. Vehementer autem proderit hoc loco repetere maxima illa et divina beneficia, quae ex Eucharistiae sacramentali communione consequimur; illa etiam figura erit addenda cum singulis diebus corporis vires manna reficere oportebat; itemque sanctorum Patrum auctoritates, quae frequentem hujus sacramenti perceptionem magnopere commendant. Neque enim unius Sancti Patris Augustini ea fuit sententia: "quotidie peccas, quotidie sume;" sed si quis diligenter attenderit, eumdem omnium Patrum, qui hac de re scripserunt, sensum fuisse, facile comperiet* (l. c.). Those who have the permission of their Father-confessor should approach the holy table frequently, even daily; they may do it with a feeling of unworthiness, without taking unworthiness for an excuse, as some do, to abstain from the celestial manna. God alone is worthy to receive God; no mortal being is worthy of His coming. "If thou hadst the purity of an angel and the sanctity of St. John the Baptist, thou wouldst not be worthy to receive or handle this sacrament" (*Imitation of Christ*, iv. 5). Woe to those who prevent others from communicating frequently! They perform, according to John of Avila,

Digitized by Google

the office of the devil. The words of St. Francis of Sales serve as a safe guidance for confessor and penitent: "Two classes of men should go to communion often; namely, the perfect and the imperfect: the perfect, that they may continue so; and the imperfect, that they may attain perfection. The strong, that they may not become weak; and the weak, that they may become strong. The sick, that they may recover health; and the healthy, that they may not become sick" (*Introduction to a Devout Life*, ii. 21).

8. The Church decreed in the Fourth Lateran Council that all the faithful are obliged, under pain of mortal sin, to receive holy communion during Easter time. By a special indult of the Holy See, the Paschal time in America extends from the first Sunday in Lent until Trinity Sunday inclusively. Announce it frequently to the people before and after Easter Sunday, and do your utmost that all under your charge make their Easter duty. *Pastores itaque animarum in Domino etiam atque etiam hortamur, ut nullum non moveant lapidem, quo omnes ipsis commissi ad praeceptum hoc servandum adducantur* (Conc. Balt. II. 256). The penalties, however, mentioned in the Lateran Decree are only *ferendae sententiae:* the priest cannot inflict them by his own pastoral authority, but only when the bishop has decided the refusal of Christian sepulture. In America Christian burial can hardly ever be denied to anybody for not having complied with his Easter duty. The precept can be fulfilled in any church; it is therefore extremely difficult to ascertain whether a person has received the Paschal communion or not. Moreover, it must be publicly known that one has without reason not received Easter communion before the censure can be inflicted. The sick who are unable to go to church are bound to comply with this Paschal precept, and the pastor is obliged to bring them holy communion within Easter time. They should be fasting from midnight unless they

Digitized by Google

are in danger of death and have to receive communion *per modum viatici.* If there be reason to believe that the sick person will be able shortly after the close of the Paschal season to receive holy communion in the church, the priest can extend the Paschal time for him.

9. When giving holy communion in public, the priest, as a rule, should administer it to all who present themselves to receive it. But he is obliged to refuse it to such as are publicly known to be unworthy of it until they have given proof of their repentance and amendment. Their reputation does not suffer from their exclusion; they are known as sinners. *Non mittendus canibus.* Proof of amendment is given by going to confession publicly, actually giving up the occasion of sin, ejecting the woman in case of concubinage, etc. The priest must defend the Lord's body against sacrilegious abuse from a *notoriously unworthy* at the risk of his life. The priest himself would be "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" if he co-operated in the scandalous profanation. Addressing himself to the priest, St. Chrysostom exclaims: *Ad vos sermonem convertere necessarium est, ut multo cum studio haec dona distribuatis. Non parva vobis imminet ultio, si quemquam, illius culpae conscii, hujus mensae participem esse concedatis: sanguis ejus de manibus vestris requiretur: sive quis dux militiae sit, sive praefectus, sive princeps, diademate coronatus, indigne autem accedat prohibe: majorem illo potestatem habes. Propterea vos Deus hoc insignivit honore, ut talia discernatis* (Off. fer. II. post Dom. infra Oct. Corporis Christi, Lectio v.).

Digitized by Google

§ 23.

The Viaticum.

1. The infinite condescension of our blessed Redeemer found a way to approach him who is unable to come to church to receive the heavenly Manna. He will come in person, and visit the sick servant. *Veniam et curabo eum* (Matt. viii. 7). At the hour of trial and agony, when sickness casts a gloom over heart and mind, and when the shadows of death are settling around soul and body, Christ will be nigh to strengthen and console and banish the darkness of fear and despair.* In the holy Viaticum He is the food for the traveller on the bleak journey towards eternity. *Factus cibus viatorum;* when He is in the soul, *mortis in examine*, all is well, and the passage will be safe.

2. The faithful shepherd will anxiously care for his sick sheep in that supreme hour, and fortify them with the *esca viatorum*, the bread of the strong. *Gravissimi sane peccati reus esset animarum pastor, cujus ob oscitantiam vel una anima ex hac vita migraret coelesti cibo haud refecta* (Conc. Balt. II. 262). Nor should the priest wait until there is no hope of recovery. The Viaticum can be given in a serious illness, for every serious illness is dan-

* Father Faber describes the power of the Viaticum which unites life and death, time and eternity, mortality and immortality: "We die in the strength of the Viaticum, our judgment is tempered by its weakness, and our purgatorial pains are cooled beneath its shadow, and its energy waxes not feeble till it has landed us, with more than angelic hand, at the feet of God in heaven. Foregoing life, the coming journey, the untold spiritual and invisible combat, the many-sided act of dying, all find their mysterious completion in the plenitude of the Viaticum; and the very flesh falls to dust and is resolved into its original elements, bearing away with it the unseen force, the indiscernible and immeasurable and indivisible Seed which will one day call it all back, make it cognizably and numerically the same, and bathe it in a flood of immortal beauty in a glorious resurrection" (*The Blessed Sacrament*).

Digitized by Google

gerous, and may prove fatal. It would be against pastoral prudence to await the doctor's opinion or to follow it in the administration of the Viaticum. An experienced priest needs no physician's advice as to the serious outcome of a disease. How often are doctors mistaken! The Viaticum should be given to a sick child that has reached the age of seven years. Very little instruction is required to prepare the sick child for the Viaticum. If the child is told that he will receive Our Lord, he will believe it, and that is sufficient. In the early days of the Church children received the Blessed Sacrament immediately after Baptism.

3. Wherever and whenever it can be done, the sick person should be visited and confession be heard before the priest brings the Viaticum. The Fathers of the Second Baltimore Council regret the fact that in America the Blessed Sacrament cannot be carried to the sick *ea cum pompa, qua vult Ecclesia*, and exhort the priests to supply the absence of external ceremonies by interior devotion and reverence. We privately subscribe to the opinion of Bishop Moriarty, that "our own homely, unceremonious way has more advantages, as insuring more frequency of communion, more grace for the sick and dying." The priest must carry the Blessed Sacrament in a bag, neatly adorned, suspended from his neck, so that the pyxis reposes on his breast, and not in a coat or vest pocket, even made expressly for it. It is of strict obligation to carry the pyxis *supra pectus. Nunquam, nisi in extrema necessitate vel ipsam Hostiam, vel vas sacrum in quo servatur, stola saltem non induti attrectent. Cum in Ecclesia Sanctissimum e tabernaculo extrahunt, semper superpelliceo et stola sint induti* (Conc. Balt. II. 264). Archbishop Kenrick gives practical instruction about the exterior demeanor of the priest when carrying the Blessed Sacrament: *Eucharistia enim reverenter deferenda est in bursa circa collum*

Digitized by Google

pendente ad pectus, stola etiam sub vestibus delata, servato quatenus fieri potest silentio: sed in itinere longinquo, quod plures dies exigit, et ubi occurrunt obvii quipiam, a colloquio abstineri nequit; quamquam parce cauteque et cum utilitate audientium sermo sit habendus. Graviter enim peccat, qui tantum Sacramentum deferens colloquia inania miscet (*Theol. Moralis*, ii. n. 26).

4. The administration of the Viaticum should be surrounded with all possible solemnity. In the chapter on Extreme Unction we shall indicate the things to be prepared in the sick-room. The priest ought to remind the people in the room of the presence of our divine Lord and make them all kneel down and adore Him. It is required that the sick person sees the sacred Host; the priest should turn towards him, no matter where the table stands. The ablution should be given to the sick if he can conveniently take it; if not, it should be carried to the church, or thrown into the fire in the house. If the priest has another particle, he gives the blessing with the pyxis to the sick, before leaving him.

§ 24.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

1. Calvary is the centre of the world and its history. On Calvary the Son of God redeemed the world by His cruel death upon the cross, and reconciled it with His eternal Father. This is the greatest historical fact since the beginning of time. All great facts group around the first Good Friday. The sacrifice on Calvary restored man to his pristine dignity and gave complete satisfaction for all human transgressions by the shedding of Christ's precious blood. In the holy sacrifice of the Mass the same divine blood is poured out again; the death of the Man-

Digitized by Google

God is repeated in a mysterious and unbloody manner; the Mass is the memorial and renewal of the sacrifice on Calvary. Obedient to a divine command, the priest takes bread and wine, and pronounces the words of consecration, and immediately the Incarnate Word is present and offers Himself again to His Father for the sins of the world.

"The sound of a low, sweet whisper
Floats over a little bread,
And trembles around a chalice,
And the priest bows down his head...
Ah! words of the olden Thursday!
Ye come from the Far-away!
Ye bring us the Friday's Victim
In His own love's olden way!"—FATHER RYAN.

2. *Gloria in excelsis Deo!* Here He receives a worship of His divine majesty: His own Son prays and sacrifices. Here He is truly glorified and His adorable name is sanctified. *Ab ortu enim solis usque ad occasum, magnum est nomen meum in Gentibus, et in omni loco sacrificatur, et offertur nomini meo oblatio munda* (Malach. i. 11). What a sublime act! How transcending all earthly ideas! How exalted above all the most worthy of human works! *Cum enim videris Dominum immolatum et jacentem, et sacerdotem sacrificio incumbentem ac precantem, omnesque pretioso illo sanguine rubentes; an putas te adhuc cum hominibus et in terra esse? Annon potius in coelos translatus, omnique carnali cogitatione eliminata, nudo animo menteque pura, quae in coelis sunt circumspicis? O miraculum! O Dei benignitatem!* (St. Chrys. *De Sac.* iii. n. 4).

"The sight of a Host uplifted!
The silver sound of a bell!
The gleam of a golden chalice—
Be glad, sad heart! 'Tis well;
He made and He keeps love's promise,
With thee all days to dwell."—FATHER RYAN.

Digitized by Google

3. *Omnis pontifex ex hominibus assumptus, pro hominibus constituitur in iis quae sunt ad Deum, ut offerat dona et sacrificia pro peccatis* (Heb. v. 1). This is the priestly function *par excellence, ut offerat sacrificia.* From this power of offering the sacrifice of the Mass flows the exalted dignity of the priesthood. *Agnoscat igitur ac reverenter suspiciat suam ipsius dignitatem sacerdos, quem Christus vicarium sibi in hoc sacrificio offerendo et adjutorem elegit. Haec quippe dignitas maximos ac praestantissimos hujus saeculi honores longe superat* (Conc. Balt. II. 355). Nay, it not only surpasses all earthly honors and dignities, but even those of the angels in heaven. Cassian exclaims: *O sacerdos Dei, si altitudinem coeli contemplaris, altior es, si pulchritudinem solis, lunae et stellarum, pulchrior es, si Dominorum sublimitatem, sublimior es, solo tuo Creatore inferior.* Why? St. Augustine gives the answer: *O veneranda sacerdotum dignitas in quorum manibus Dei filius velut in utero virginis incarnatur!* Thomas à Kempis expresses his astonishment at the priestly dignity in those celebrated words: "Oh, how great and honorable is the office of the priests, to whom it is given to consecrate with sacred words the Lord of Majesty; to bless Him with their lips, to hold Him with their hands, to receive Him with their mouth, and to administer Him to others!" (Book iv. 6.)

4. Under the Old Law God required of the priests *ut perfecti perfecta offerent* (St. Greg. Naz. *Oratio de Fuga*, n. 94). He threatened those with the most serious penalty who, without the requisite sanctity, dared offer sacrifice. *Sacerdotes qui accedunt ad Dominum, sanctificentur, ne percutiat eos* (Exod. xix. 22). And yet the priesthood with its sacrificial rites of the Old Testament was but a type of the great reality of the new covenant. *Et antiquum documentum novo cedat ritui.* Will God be more lenient with the unhappy priest who dares insult Him by celebrating

Digitized by Google

Mass without the garment of sanctifying grace? St. Alphonsus briefly characterizes such an abominable sacrilege: *Indigne conficit, sumit, indigne et indigno ministrat.* Sacramental confession is necessary; contrition will not suffice, except when there is a real *necessitas celebrandi* and no *copia confessoris. Si enim Ecclesiae lex Christianum quemvis, qui Christi corpus suscipere velit, ab omni lethalis peccati labe liberum esse jubet, profecto longe majus quiddam a sacerdote postulabit, qui Christi corpus et sanguinem non suscipere tantum, sed etiam conficere et aliis ministrare aggreditur!* (Conc. Balt. II. 355.)

5. The celebration of Mass demands of the priest not only the state of grace, but also the practice of perfection. In the ordination of a priest the bishop prays: *Eluceat in eis totius forma justitiae;* he addresses the ordinandi: *Ideo vos admoneo, ut ita vos exhibeatis, ut Deo placere possitis.* The Mass itself preaches the practice of virtue. It announces the death of the Lord, and exhorts the celebrant to die to the world and its concupiscence. *Mortificare membra vestra a vitiis et concupiscentiis omnibus procuretis* (ibid.). All we have and are must be surrendered to the service of the Lord. Thus we give Him, without reserve or regret, our liberty of mind and will; we desire to know nothing but Him crucified. For His sake we curb the gross and vulgar appetites for eating and drinking; we love frugality and simplicity at our homes. *Habentes alimenta et quibus tegamur, his contenti simus* (1 Tim. vi. 8). We suppress ill-temper and every angry feeling in our hearts, and cheerfully put on the meekness and humility of the Lamb of God.

6. Above all, the heart of the priest must be adorned with purity and chastity. On the altar he stands in closest proximity to his Master, the King of virgins, *quem mater illa concipit, quae sola virgo parturit; . . . cujus mater virgo est, cujus pater feminam nescit; . . . quem*

Digitized by Google

cum amavero, castus sum; cum tetigero mundus sum; cum accepero, virgo sum (Off. St. Agnes). A spotless purity is an indispensable gem in the priestly diadem. Without its lustre the sacerdotal heart has no charm for the *Virgin's Son.* St. Chrysostom looks for a spiritual brightness eclipsing that of the sun: *Etenim solaribus radiis puriorem esse opportet sacerdotis animam, nequando Spiritus sanctus illum desertum relinquat, ut possit dicere: "Vivo autem, jam non ego: vivit vero in me Christus"* (l. c. vi. 1). Again he says: *Idcirco sacerdotium obeuntem ita purum esse decet, ac si in coelis inter potestates illas collocatus esset* (l. c. iii. 4). The pious author of the *Imitation of Christ* exclaims: "How clean ought those hands to be, how pure that mouth, how holy that body, how unspotted the heart of a priest, into whom the Author of purity so often enters! From the mouth of a priest nothing but what is holy, no word but what is good and profitable, ought to proceed, who so often receives the sacrament of Christ. His eyes ought to be simple and chaste, which are used to behold the body of Christ; his hands pure and lifted up to heaven, which are used to handle the Creator of heaven are earth. Unto the priests especially it is said in the law, *Be you holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy*" (Book iv. 6, 7).

7. The immediate preparation begins with the anticipation of Matins and Lauds on the previous afternoon or evening. *Saltem Matutino cum Laudibus absoluto*, the Roman Missal indicates. Mass and Office are intimately united; they explain each other. The Office is generally the commentary of the Mass, and the Mass the *résumé* of the Office. In the lessons of the day we find excellent food for meditation; and meditation is the next step in the immediate preparation for the holy mysteries. Some kind of meditation in the morning should enkindle the heart. *In meditatione mea exardescit ignis* (Ps. xxxviii. 4). After

Digitized by Google

meditation, a few fervent prayers should cleanse the mind from all unholy and worldly thoughts and fill it with the sanctity of the great sacrifice. As you leave your room to go to the church, recall the inspired words of the Royal Singer: *Laetatus sum in his quae dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus* (Ps. cxxi. 1). In the church kneel for a few moments at the foot of the tabernacle, and ask the great High-Priest to bless you, and to prepare Himself a worthy dwelling in your soul. Let nothing disturb you. A holy tranquillity must take you captive: *Ingens intus quies* (St. Chrys.). Do not speak to any one in the vestry unless through real necessity. While vesting, piously reflect on the deep and beautiful meaning of the prayers which you are obliged to recite. After bowing to the emblem of the crucified Master, go to the altar in a solemn and dignified manner, *oculis demissis*, noticing nothing about you, thinking only of Him who is to come at your bidding.

8. The celebration of the Mass is surrounded with significant ceremonies and rubrics that are calculated to excite devotion and impress the faithful with the awful grandeur of the holy sacrifice. The priest should possess a thorough knowledge of these rubrics, and observe them most conscientiously. He should read them over once a year, for instance, at the time of the annual retreat, and endeavor to understand their historical and mystical meaning. *Nullus enim in peragendo hoc Sacrificio ritus adhibetur, nulla caeremonia, quae inanis aut supervacanea citra impietatem existimari possit* (Conc. Balt. II. 357). Certain negligences or mistakes will gradually creep in unnoticed, and will become a baneful habit unless checked in time. If the rubrics of the Mass are not carefully observed, if the ceremonies are distorted, they will produce a ludicrous effect in the eyes of non-Catholics and scandalize the faithful. *Maledictus qui facit opus Domini fraudulenter*

Digitized by Google

(Jer. xlviii. 10). Be accurate in making the genuflections, kisses, crosses, etc. When kissing the altar, bow down directly, touch it with the lips, and do not lean to one side. Join words and ceremonies together: begin the *Kyrie* only when you stand in the middle of the altar, the *Lavabo* when the water is being poured. Wipe the chalice *gently* only after reaching the epistle side. When the hands are extended, the palms must face and the fingers touch each other, without being seen to rise higher than the shoulders. Turn the leaves of the Missal quietly, without *ever* wetting the finger or thumb. Close the book after having entirely finished the prayers, so that the open side is turned towards the tabernacle. Never look at the people when turning to say *Dominus vobiscum* or to give the blessing. Never spit on the altar; never raise your cassock to get your handkerchief.

9. Besides the correct performance of the ceremonies of Mass the celebrant should carefully observe the rubrical prescriptions about the various tones of voice in which the different prayers are to be said. Three different tones are used at Low Mass: *vox alta, media et secreta* (see Wapelhorst, n. 47). The people must hear the words which are to be said *alta voce*. Shouting as well as mumbling are reprehensible. *Evitanda festinatio est et praecipitantia quaedam, quae sine scandalo existere nequit; prolixitas quoque, quae adstantibus fastidium pariat. Itaque nequis infra horae trientem Missam absolvere audeat, nec ultra dimidiam horam producat. Sacerdotes, qui incomposite, festinanter, et praecipiti lingua Sacrum peragunt, a Missae peragendae munere arcendos judicavit Benedictus XIV.* (Conc. Balt. II. 363). Guard against undue haste by paying constant and devout attention to the prayers and ceremonies, especially those of the Canon. *Cum perveneris ad sacrum canonem, recollige mentem, ne per diversa vagetur; appone diligentiam magnam in signis et actibus,*

Digitized by Google

majorem in verbis, maximam in intentione (St. Bonav.). Avila once remarked to a careless and hasty celebrant: "Treat Him well: He belongs to a good family." On the other side, the priest must guard against useless delay and slowness. The Missal is *marked* in the vestry, and not on the altar. How tedious to the people when the priest spends five minutes in "looking for the right place"! Do not delay too long at the Mementos of the Living and the Dead, nor after communion; do not indulge in any private devotion during Mass, but reserve it for your thanksgiving after Mass. Bishop Moriarty is summing up all practical instruction on the *festinatio* and *prolixitas*: "You may have sometimes observed a vulgar laziness or looseness of manner and movement, which is the most perfect expression of indifference and disregard. We have seen it on the altar. It is shocking. It looks like want of faith. When a man is intent on some mighty deed the earnestness of the soul braces the frame and shows forth dignity. Where the soul is filled with awe and reverence for the present majesty of God there must be the outward manifestation of solemnity, and this is incompatible with a slipshod, slovenly movement of feet and shoulders or with careless precipitation or with a dissipated air of distraction, or with that which is the opposite extreme.... Awkwardness causes delay, sometimes it is the result of a silly scrupulousness. We may have seen priests spending minutes purifying the corporal or the paten* or the chalice, which might have been done in so many seconds. Unnecessary delay causes distraction and impatience in the congregation. A steady, uninterrupted action in the sacred rite sustains the attention of the people."

10. People should be called to Mass by the hallowed

* One day, after saying Mass in a country church, a man came to me and seriously asked me to show his pastor "how to clean the little plate (paten), for it takes him five minutes to do it."

Digitized by Google

voice of the church-bell. It is an old Christian custom, and it should be introduced where it does not exist. Say Mass at a fixed time, convenient for the people. Do not anticipate nor delay it, otherwise the people will become confused and neglectful. *Serva ordinem, et servabit te ordo.* On missions you may have to hear confessions before Mass. Insist that the penitents come at the appointed hour, and if some are not heard at the time stated for Mass, begin Mass and hear them afterwards. Frequently preach on the excellence of the Mass and the serious obligation of assisting at it on Sundays and holydays of obligation. *Vehementer cupimus, ut animarum moderatores commissos sibi greges saepe ac diligenter doceant divini hujus Sacrificii dignitatem ac praestantiam, uberrimosque fructus, qui in pie ac devote Sacris adstantes deriventur. Iis in memoriam non semel revocent, ac maximopere inculcent gravissimam illam, qua tenentur omnes Christifideles, obligationem singulis Dominicis festisque de praecepto diebus Missam audiendi* (Conc. Balt. II. 365). Prevent the abuse of staying or "hanging" around the church before Mass on Sundays. Keep speaking against it *in omni patientia*, publicly and privately, but do not thereby drive young people away from the church. Have singing in the vernacular or the recitation of some favorite prayers, to draw people inside. The public recitation of the Rosary during Mass seems to be a hindrance to private devotion. People ought to be taught to follow the priest through the different parts of the holy sacrifice, to use, if possible, the "Ordinary of the Mass" which is found in every large prayer-book, and which is far superior to any other prayer. Cardinal Wiseman maintains that no human genius can hope to equal these prayers of the Mass in beauty and sublimity. "In these two qualities the Mass differs from all other devotions in a remarkable manner. It has not merely flights of eloquence and poetry, strik-

Digitized by Google

ingly displayed in particular prayers, but it is sustained throughout in the higher sphere, to which its divine purpose naturally raises it. If we examine each prayer separately, it is perfect; perfect in construction, perfect in thought, and perfect in expression. If we consider the manner in which they are brought together, we are struck with the brevity of each, with the sudden but beautiful transitions, and the almost stanza-like effect with which they succeed one another, forming a lyrical composition of surpassing beauty. If we take the entire service as a whole, it is constructed with the most admirable symmetry, proportioned in its parts with perfect judgment, and so exquisitely arranged as to excite and preserve an unbroken interest in the sacred action. No doubt, to give full force and value to this sacred rite, its entire ceremonial is to be considered. The assistants, with their noble vestments, the chant, the incense, the more varied ceremonies which belong to a Solemn Mass, are all calculated to increase veneration and admiration. But still the essential beauties remain, whether the holy rite be performed under the golden vault of St. Peter's, with all the pomp and circumstance befitting its celebration by the Sovereign Pontiff, or in a wretched wigwam, erected in haste by some poor savages for their missionary" (*Essays*, i. 421).* To a

* In the same place the learned Cardinal gives a magnificent description of a part of the "Ordinary of the Mass" which may suggest fruitful ideas to the priest for his sermons on the Mass:

"What can be more appropriate than the opening psalm and humble confession of sin by priest and people, the former yet standing at a distance from the altar, feeling himself unworthy to approach! Then comes the Introit, which seems intended to be the key-note to the whole service; which, being one in its essence, yet adapts itself to all our wants, whether of propitiation or of thanksgiving, whether of evils to be averted or blessings to be gained. Sometimes this introductory verse is loud and joyous—*Gaudeamus omnes in Domino;* sometimes low and plaintive—*Miserere mihi Domine quoniam tribulor;* in the Paschal solemnity the Alleluia rings through it all, like a peal of cheerful bells; in Passiontide even the *Gloria Patri* is silent, and it falls melancholy and dull;

Digitized by Google

Catholic the hearing of Mass should be a priceless boon which he cannot easily renounce. He should not expose himself to an unnecessary danger of losing it on Sundays and holydays of obligation; he should not engage in business or in labor that would prevent him from hearing Mass on those days; least of all should he spend his vacation, for instance, at a place where Mass is not said on Sundays. "Where there is no Mass, there is no Christianity," Father Faber says. Where there is no Christianity, there a Christian can find no pleasure.

11. Show your respect for the adorable sacrifice by keeping all the necessary vestments, sacred vessels, and various linens in good condition and shining neatness. Conscientiously observe the statute of the Second Baltimore Council: *In divino sacrificio celebrando detur opera dili-*

when a saint is commemorated the nature of his virtues and his triumphs is at once proclaimed; if it be a festival of Our Lord, the mystery which it celebrates is solemnly announced. The chord thus struck at the opening of the service returns at given intervals, as if to keep up the tone throughout. At the Gradual, the Offertory, and the Communion the verses read are in perfect harmony with it; and having, moreover, a corresponding and even deeper echo in the Collects, Gospel, and Preface, one feeling is preserved, suited to the devotion which the liturgy, in its essence and main purposes invariable, is intended secondarily to excite. The *Kyrie eleison*—that cry of East and West—seems introduced as if to give grander effect to the outburst of joy and praise which succeeds it in the *Gloria in excelsis;* it is a deepening of our humiliation, that our triumph may be the better felt. That hymn itself is full of beauties; the best demonstration of which is, that no composition ever lent itself more perfectly to the musician's skill; none ever afforded better play to the rich and rapid succession of every mode, gay and grave; none better supplied the slow and entreating cadence, or the full and powerful chorus. In the simple Gregorian chant, or in the pure religious harmonies of Palestrina, it is truly the 'Hymn of Angels.'

"We should feel ourselves wholly unequal to the task of pointing out the excellence of the prayers which occupy the essential portions of the liturgy, from the Offertory to the end. It has often struck us that one single word could not be changed to advantage in any one of them; that there is more meaning compressed into a small space than in almost any other composition which we know; and that everything is said which could be required or desired. All the prayers connected with the Offertory are

Digitized by Google

genter, ut omnia altarium ornamenta, et sacra vasa sint munda; non foeda corporalia, vel purificatoria; non vestes lacerae vel indecentes; indusia vero privati apparatus sub amictu et alba lateant ita ut non indecoro, vel mundano more appareant; nec quidquam altari tremendo, vel sacramentorum administratione indignum sit (No. 360). Do not buy any costly vestments for poor missions; buy them cheap, and renew them every few years. Do not wear a soiled and faded chasuble; it is scandalous to represent Christ in a shabby or greasy vestment. "You should not clothe Him as Herod did, with a fool's coat. There is no excuse for this. Vestments can now be had at a very moderate price, at less than the price of your cloth coat. If both are getting old and threadbare, surely the vestment should be the first thought" (Mori-

remarkably short; but they are full of vigor and of feeling; there is in them a most heavenly and sublime simplicity, a mild and tender pathos. When the priest, having completed his oblation, bows himself down upon the altar, and humbles himself in contrition of heart, as unworthy of his ministry, then with a noble confidence rises erect, lifts his hands and eyes to heaven, and solemnly invokes the God who dwells there, saying, *Veni Sanctificator, omnipotens aeterne Deus*, and in His name blesses the sacred gift,—there is an awful grandeur in the rite, an assurance of its efficacy in heaven as on earth. It seems as though the priest instantly retired in order to make way for Him whom he had so powerfully called down to bless his offering, and went to seek still greater purity of hands and heart, so to return to his ministration more worthy to 'hear the words of praise' which the Church, in concert with holy angels, is about to sing in her hosannas. The prefaces are all perfect in substance and in form; there could not be a more splendid introduction, with the hymn which closes them, to the divine rite that follows. Here we must pause, because the subject becomes too sacred for our pen; the ground on which we are about to tread is holy, and the shoes must be loosed from the feet of him who will venture upon it. To speak worthily on it requires language and a mood far removed from the humble office which we are exercising. We stated, at the outset, that we were not going to read a homily upon prayer, but only to act the ungrateful part of critics. We therefore content ourselves with saying that those who would wish to learn how prayers may or should be composed should meditate long and deeply upon these apostolic prayers, which have nothing beyond them save God's inspired word."

Digitized by Google

arty's *Allocutions*). Take care that the chalices, patens, ciborium, and the lunette of the remonstrance are kept bright and shining; they must be gilded from time to time. Special attention should be given to the altar linens which come so near the adorable body of Christ. Think of the reverence which Joseph of Arimathea showed to this body: *Et accepto corpore, Joseph involvit illud in sindone* MUNDA (Matt. xxvii. 59). If there are nuns in the congregation they willingly will attend to the church linens. In the absence of a convent, a pious lady* may be found to wash them; in default of either, the priest should cheerfully do it himself, esteeming it a high and holy privilege to wash the Lord's own linen. The candlesticks and flower-vases on the altar should be polished every week. Only wax candles can be used at Mass. According to the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* artificial flowers are allowed for the decoration of the altar; but they are a sham, and often dangerous near lighted candles. Natural flowers are vastly preferable and more symbolical. In country places real flowers can be had at all times; the priest himself can easily cultivate them. When the people are encouraged to send flowers, and the priest publicly thanks and blesses them for so doing, the altar will be seldom without flowers on days on which their use is permitted. The priest may repeat to his people the memorable words of St. Jerome, who thus wrote in praise of a certain Nepotianus: *Erat ergo sollicitus, si niteret altare, si parietes absque fuligine, si pavimenta tersa . . . basilicas Ecclesiae et conciliabula diversis floribus et arborum comis vitiumque pampinis adumbravit* (*Ep. ad Heliod.* n. 12). A church may be poor, but it can be exquisitely neat, and as such it will be always beautiful and attractive. A celebrated American missionary, Father Weninger, wrote some years ago: *Profecto*

* Be careful, however, in accepting the free service of a woman. It is often better to pay than to be paid back by a woman's tongue.

Digitized by Google

pauper, sed singulariter munda Ecclesia plus devotionis inspirat quam dives et sordida et pulveribus foedata. Put it down as a rule: *Qualis Ecclesia, talis sacerdos. Ecclesia est speculum pastoris et conscientiae ejusdem.* If you desire to know in a strange place what kind of a man the *pastor loci* is, first pay a visit to his church. The people, no matter how poor they may be, will furnish you the means to make and keep the place of the holy sacrifice respectable and even beautiful, especially when they notice the devout faith of the priest in the real presence of Christ. If there be anything among Catholics for which it is easy to collect money, it is the altar. A well established and regulated altar-society will bring the necessary means for the proper keeping of the sanctuary, for which nothing is too nice or costly. Have the church swept every Saturday forenoon; in the afternoon nothing should disturb the devotion of those who come for confession. When the people realize that your heart is in your church, and that you love it as the dearest spot on earth, they will love you, and make any sacrifice at your request for the house of the Lord. And you will serve the Lord *in veritate* when, daily "compassing His altar," you say with the Psalmist: *Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuae: et locum habitationis gloriae tuae.*

12. The greatest importance is to be attached to the genuineness of the *matter* of the sacrifice. *Curetur omni studio, ut purissima aptissimaque sit materia, quae ad augustum hoc sacramentum conficiendum adhibetur. Hostiae sint ex tritici farina et aqua naturali confectae, recentes, macularum expertes, quaeque haud facile in fragmenta dissiliant* (Conc. Balt. II. 372). The altar bread should not be older than about fifteen days; it is unbecoming to use stale hosts. Do not get more than you require for two weeks. In the United States the consecrated species have to be renewed every eight days. This law affects the

Digitized by Google

most holy body of Christ; negligence in this matter would be intolerable carelessness and disrespect. The safest way of having the altar bread of pure wheaten flour is to get it from some convent. Nuns are generally careful to procure the flour directly from the mill, and not from a retailer's store, where it sometimes makes the acquaintance of Indian corn, rice, or chalk. On some of our missions the priest has to bake the bread himself. He should wait three days after baking before he cuts the particles. Greater precaution still is necessary to provide pure wine for Mass: *vinum de vite*, the juice of the grape. In our days it is difficult to distinguish spurious and artificial wines from the real grape wine. Never buy altar-wine at a hotel, restaurant, or wholesale liquor store. Even wine merchants, though honest and practical Catholics, are easily deceived about the purity of wines. It is safer to use native wine than imported German or French wines. Reasons of economy or friendship should never influence you in the purchase of altar wine: the purest and best wine is none too good to be changed into the precious blood, *cujus una stilla salvum facere totum mundum quit ab omni scelere.* Not even a defect, such as bad taste, acidity, sediment, should be tolerated in wine for Mass. The following decree of the Second Baltimore Council must be kept conscientiously in mind by the priest in America: *Summa autem sollicitudo adhiberi debet in his provinciis, ut vinum certo genuinum ad sacrificium eucharisticum procuretur. Quoniam experientia compertum est, vini genera, quae in hisce regionibus sub nomine vulgari Port, Madeira, Sherry, Malaga, etc., vaenire solent, maximam partem et plerumque substantialiter adulterari, imo saepe omnino artificiose confici, ea ad sacrosanctum sacrificium non facile adhibeantur; sed potius illa seligantur, quae vocantur vulgari sermone Sauterne, Bordeaux, Catawba, Isabella et alia, de quorum genuina natura nullum subest dubium rationabile. Praesertim*

Digitized by Google

tamen suadendum est, ut ab ipsis vitis cultoribus, qui Catholici sint ac notae probitatis, vinum ad sacrificium necessarium obtineatur; quod nunc temporis, cum vitis indigena fere ubique colatur, et magna sit vini inde facti copia, tanta plerumque facilitate fieri potest, ut nulla in re tam gravi negligentiae excusatio valere jam possit (No. 373).

13. Another necessary *article* for holy Mass is a SERVER. Except in case of necessity, a priest cannot celebrate, not even in private, without a minister who serves him at the holy sacrifice and answers, in the name of the people, the prayers and blessings of the celebrant. "The server should consider himself highly honored, being permitted to attend on a priest offering the most holy sacrifice. He should therefore perform his important office with great purity of conscience, rectitude of intention, devotion, and decorum" (*Balt. Cerem.*). He must wear a soutane, without cape, and a surplice. The cassock may be red or black; purple is allowed only in cathedral churches. Select the best and most intelligent boys for the service of the altar. Instruct them yourself to perform their duty with intelligence and reverent demeanor. Show them how to make the prescribed inclinations, genuflections, and movements. Teach them to pronounce the Latin correctly and distinctly. See that their cassocks and surplices are always neat and in repair. Make them thoroughly good and pious, and you will make their mothers happy and edify the whole congregation. Never allow them to talk in the vestry or to stare at the people from the vestry door, to look and run about the sanctuary, or to leave the altar during Mass. The *Baltimore Ceremonial* directs the server that in answering he should pronounce not too loud nor too quickly. "His manner should be grave, without affectation. He should hold his head a little inclined, and his eyes modestly lowered. To put on the surplice in a proper manner the server should

Digitized by Google

open the lower part of it, and with both his hands pass it over the head upon his shoulders. Afterwards he puts first the right arm in the right sleeve, and then the left in the other sleeve; and having adjusted it about his person, fastens it in front. In taking it off he should first loose the strings, then withdraw his left arm from the sleeve, and lifting the surplice from the left side above the head over his right shoulder, he takes it off from the right arm."

14. The *New Code* (Can. 466) obliges pastors to celebrate Mass *pro populo* every Sunday, on the ten general holy-days: Christmas, Circumcision, Epiphany, Ascension, Corpus Christi, Immaculate Conception, Assumption, St. Joseph (Mar. 19), Sts. Peter and Paul, and All Saints, and on the suppressed holy-days. These, according to a decree of the Sacred Cong. of the Council (Dec. 28, 1919) are: Monday and Tuesday following Easter and Pentecost, Finding of Holy Cross (May 3), Purification, Annunciation, Nativity of B. V. M., Dedication of St. Michael, Nativity of St. John the Baptist, the Apostles Sts. Andrew, James, John, Thomas, Philip and James, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude, Matthias; St. Stephen, Holy Innocents, St. Lawrence (Aug. 10), St. Sylvester (Dec. 31) and St. Anne.

A pastor who has charge of several united parishes or who has the administration of another or other parishes is bound, on the days prescribed, to apply only one Mass for all the people under his care.

The Ordinary may for a just cause permit a pastor to apply the Mass for the people on another day than that prescribed by law.

The pastor should celebrate this Mass for the people in the parish church, unless circumstances demand otherwise.

A pastor lawfully absent can apply Mass for the people either himself in the place where he is staying or through the priest who is taking his place in the parish.

On Christmas Day and if a holy-day falls on a Sunday, it is sufficient to offer one Mass for the people. (Can. 339 § 2).

The pastor must apply the Mass for the people personally on the days prescribed; if lawfully prevented, he may have it applied by another; if that cannot be done, he must apply it as soon as possible either by himself or through another. (Can. 339 § 4).

Those who have not satisfied their obligations as above stated, must supply as soon as possible the number of Masses omitted. (Can. 339 § 6.)

Digitized by Google

Carefully mark in a book intentions received, with amount of stipend for each Mass; also the date on which intention was persolved. You may die suddenly: *Nescitis diem, neque horam.* Keep a clear account of your intentions; *estote parati.*

15. In giving His apostles the power of consecrating, Christ imposed upon them the obligation of saying Mass. *Hoc facite in meam commemorationem.* Wherefore St. Thomas says: *Unusquisque tenetur uti gratia sibi data cum fuerit opportunum juxta illud apostoli:* "*Hortamur vos, ne in vacuum gratiam Dei recipiatis*" (*S. Theol.* iii. qu. 82, a. 10). Theologians maintain that a priest would commit a mortal sin if he did not celebrate at least three or four times within the year. A good priest desires to receive the *panis quotidianus* in the *daily* Mass which Cardinal Manning calls the greatest help of the priest.*

* In counting up the special helps which surround a priest in all his life, the Cardinal says: "First, and above all, is his daily Mass. ('When the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore.') The day begins with the presence of Jesus; the altar is the shore of the eternal world, and Jesus comes at our word. In the holy Mass we know Him, and yet our eyes are holden. He is in another form. We cannot see Him; but we know that it is the Lord. He makes ready for us, and gives to us the Bread of Life. If we were to spend a whole life in preparation, one such divine contact with His presence would be an overpayment of all our prayer and penance and purification of heart. But He comes to us, not once in our life only, but morning by morning. Every day begins with Him. If the first hour of every day were spent in the presence, certain though unseen, of our guardian-angel or of our patron saint, our whole day would be restrained and elevated by it. Familiarity might deaden at last our vivid sense of so near an approach of the supernatural world, and we might cease to realize it. But the holy Mass is more than all this. It is the personal presence of the Lord of angels and of saints; and yet through familiarity with the exceeding condescension of His great humility we may gradually lose the vividness of our perception. The Council of Trent teaches us that the presence of Jesus is above the laws and order of nature. He is there, God and Man, in personal reality and substance; and we, when we hold the Blessed Sacrament in our hands, are in contact with the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of the world. The Council says again that He is

Digitized by Google

If the faithful are exhorted to assist daily at holy Mass, and pious souls are invited to receive daily communion, it necessarily follows that the priest ought to say Mass every day, unless prevented by serious sickness or utter impossibility. Suarez voices the wishes of the Church when he writes: *Sacerdotibus consulendum est, ut quotidie sacrificent: est enim per se loquendo hoc melius. Nam munus sacrificandi non est privatum, sed publicum, nec prodest soli sacrificanti, sed toti Ecclesiae: et ideo dummodo*

present, not as in a place, but as He is a substance. In the divine order there is no time, and place is not. We are in contact with the eternal world; and that contact is real and substantial and personal, both on His side and on ours. We behold Him face to face by the vision of the faith. Beyond this there is nothing but the vision of the blessed. After the Consecration we are already admitted to it under a veil. *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*, to us sinners also is granted in the holy Mass a share and a friendship with the saints and martyrs in the heavenly court. From the Consecration to the Communion we are as truly and more consciously with Him than Cleophas and his companion on the way to Emmaus. And though our eyes are holden our understanding is not. We see Him in another shape; but we know Him while we see Him. And we speak to Him as our Lord, our Master, our Friend; and by an inward speech He answers us in words which it is not in man to utter. His abiding is for a short interval of time, but that brief time encloses an abyss of light and peace. We say Mass morning by morning all our life, but we never reach the end of this mystery of His personal nearness. There is no fixed horizon to the multitude of His sweetness, which expands on every side like the illimitable sea. And yet all its sweetness is hid in the Blessed Sacrament for those who seek Him in holy fear. And before He departs from us for a season, to come again to-morrow, He takes and gives to us His precious body and blood as in the guest-chamber, on that last night of farewell, and as at Emmaus, when He vanished out of their sight. He is gone, but in a little while He is to be found again in the midst of His disciples; as the Council says again that 'Jesus, having loved His own while He was in the world, loved them to the end:' 'that He might never be absent from His own, gave, by an inexplicable counsel of His wisdom, a pledge of His love above the order and conditions of nature'—that is, His own perpetual presence veiled from sight. When the Archangel Raphael departed from Tobias and his son so that they could see him no more, they lay 'for three hours prostrate on their faces.' What ought to be our thanksgiving after Mass?" (*The Eternal Priesthood.*)

Digitized by Google

(*positive*) *indignus non sit, et moralem ac humanam diligentiam adhibeat, quamvis sit imperfectus, non debet ab hoc sacro munere cessare.* The sainted Archbishop Seghers, the apostle of Alaska, wrote to a friend: "Woe to the priest in America who neglects to say Mass every day that he has an opportunity to do so!" A custom to the contrary is a damnable abuse. Say Mass every day, even when indisposed, whether you have people to attend it or not, despite scorching heat or bitter cold. If you have no stipend for it, it will be all the more pleasing to the Divine Majesty. Let the riches of heavenly blessings from the daily Mass flow on your soul and into the hearts of the dear people confided to your care. Remember what faith teaches you. "When a priest celebrates, he honors God, he rejoices the angels, he edifies the Church, he helps the living, he obtains rest for the dead, and makes himself partaker of all that is good" (Thomas à Kempis, iv. 5). Happy the priest who realizes his God-given power over the real body of Christ, and who daily feasts at the holy altar and drinks the living water from the loving heart of the blessed Master!

"Oh, love that is deep and deathless!
Oh, faith that is strong and grand!
Oh, hope that will shine forever
O'er the wastes of a weary land!
Christ's Heart finds an earthly heaven
In the palm of the priest's pure hand."

—FATHER RYAN.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

§ 25.

The Ministry of Reconciliation.

1. THE end of the priestly mission is the same as that of Jesus Christ, whom the Father sent into this world to seek and save the lost and to heal the wounded and contrite heart. *Misit me sanare contritos corde* (Luke iv. 18). It was essentially a mission of peace and forgiveness. On the day of His resurrection He solemnly communicated to His apostles and their successors in the priesthood the power to continue His mission and the means to carry on the work of reconciliation to the end of time. *Pax vobis. Sicut misit me Pater, et ego mitto vos.... Accipite Spiritum sanctum: quorum remiseritis peccata, remittuntur eis* (John xx. 21–23). With these words the Son of God instituted the Sacrament of Penance, and made men the dispensers of divine mercy, investing them with divine power, the power of forgiving sin, and not of merely declaring that sin is forgiven, as the priests of old attested the cleansing of a leper, but of really purifying the soul from the leprosy of sin. *Hi vero non lepram corporis, sed immunditiam animae, non purgatam probandi, sed prorsus purgandi potestatem acceperunt* (St. Chrys. *De Sacerd.*, iii. 6). Well might we be astonished at this wondrous power which the priest possesses and exercises in the holy tribunal, and glorify the merciful God, *qui dedit potestatem talem hominibus* (Matt. ix. 8).

2. In communicating the power of absolution, Christ drew no limits whatever: the power is boundless and universal as divine mercy itself. Limits are placed by the

Digitized by Google

sinful obstinacy of man. *Quorum remiseritis peccata, remittuntur eis:* there is no restriction as to quantity or quality of sin. *Si fuerint peccata vestra ut coccinum, quasi nix dealbabuntur: et si fuerint rubra quasi vermiculus, velut lana alba erunt* (Isaias i. 18). It is of the greatest practical importance to dwell frequently on the universality of the absolving power. It will inspire the sinner with hope and courage to rise from the mire of iniquity, to break the chains of vice, and to begin a new and better life. *Misericordia Dei peccantibus per poenitentiam veniam praebet absque ullo termino: unde dicitur II. Paral. ultimo: Immensa et investigabilis misericordia promissionis tuae super malitiam hominum* (St. Thom. iii. qu. 84, a. 10). Despondency is an ordinary obstacle to conversion. Want of confidence in God's boundless mercy is often the cause why the sinner remains away from the fountain of peace and joy. We should frequently repeat, in sermons and instructions, that there are no sins which cannot be forgiven if the sinner sincerely repents.

3. Christ instituted the Sacrament of Penance by way of indulgence, and not of strict and inexorable justice. *Misericordia et veritas obviaverunt sibi: justitia et pax osculatae sunt* (Ps. lxxxiv. 11). The faithful should be well instructed on the different parts of this sacrament. Confession should be facilitated for them by every possible means. They should learn from the teaching of the Church as well as from personal experience how God's mercy shines forth in all its splendor; how His infinite majesty stoops down with infinite condescension to the deepest misery of man; how sweet the yoke of the Lord is and how light His burden. The "horrors of the confessional" which haunt the prejudiced minds of credulous and superstitious non-Catholics originate in ignorance of the true religion or in the vile calumnies of lecherous apostates.

Digitized by Google

Satan hates the confessional with infernal hatred, knowing what he loses by it. *Omnibus fere piis persuasum est, quidquid hoc tempore sanctitatis, pietatis et religionis in Ecclesia, summi Dei beneficio, conservatum est, id magna ex parte confessioni tribuendum esse; ut nulli mirandum sit, humani generis hostem cum fidem catholicam funditus evertere cogitat, per ministros impietatis suae et satellites, hanc veluti christianae virtutis arcem totis viribus oppugnare conatum esse* (*Catech. Rom.* p. ii. c. v., qu. 32). But the true Christian can imagine no easier way of pardon which is at the same time better adapted to the wants of human nature than confession. *Neque enim multa neque difficilia sunt ea, quorum ope homo Christianus, quem criminum admissorum poenitet, noxam eluere, amissam justitiam recuperare, et in Dei gratiam et amicitiam restitui potest. Atque ea ipsa quidem, quae sponte fit, peccatorum confessio, tantum abest ut, quod impii homines dicunt, cruciatus et carnificinae loco habenda sit, ut sit potius singulare quoddam et eximium aegri, afflicti, et turbati animi remedium ac levamentum. Quod experientia testatur, et facile prudens quisque intelliget, qui hominum vitam moresque perspectos habet* (Conc. Balt. II. 274).

4. The confessional is the workshop of the priest. There is his staple occupation. There he truly continues the work of Christ's redemption. There he reaps a plentiful harvest. "In the other duties of the ministry you sow the seed; in the tribunal of penance you gather in the harvest. Elsewhere you plant and you water, here God giveth the increase. In preaching and catechising you cast the net, in the confessional you take the plentiful draught" (Moriarty, l. c.). Nor can we think of a pastoral duty more useful and more helpful to souls. *Confessarii munere nihil est praestantius, nihil Ecclesiae Dei et animarum saluti utilius. Sacro enim ejus ministerio*

Digitized by Google

peccator delictorum onere levatur, daemonis et cupiditatum jugo liberatur, amissaeque innocentiae stola rursum induitur; genua debilia roborantur, id est, imbecilles animo ac desides eriguntur; justi denique ad perseverandum in bono, et repositam sibi justitiae coronam assequendam, admotis quasi calcaribus, concitantur atque incenduntur (Conc. Balt. II. 278). St. Pius V. knew of no better means to reform Catholics than by providing them with good confessors. *Dentur idonei Confessarii, ecce omnium christianorum plena reformatio.*

5. But the duty of hearing confession is both difficult and dangerous. Few would have courage to undertake it were it not for a special assistance of the Lord and according to His express will. In the confessional the priest represents the majesty of God by exercising His prerogatives of justice and mercy. He judges in His stead. The power is not absolute, but ministerial; to the Supreme Judge he is accountable for his judicial acts. *Quam vero magnum et arduum sit hoc munus Confessarii, vel ex eo patet, quod judex Christi loco constituatur, deque suis judiciis sit aliquando accuratam rationem Summo Judici redditurus. Sibi igitur dictum arbitretur, quod pientissimus ille Israelitarum rex judicibus a se designatis olim dixit: "Videte quid faciatis; non enim hominis exercetis judicium sed Domini; et quodcumque judicaveritis in vos redundabit"* (Conc. Balt. II. 279). Besides the pressing weight of responsibility, the virtue of the priest is put to a severe test in the confessional. What is more trying and taxing to his patience than to sit for long hours, and to bear with rude and ignorant people, to draw in foul breath and poisoned air, to suffer in a number of insulting and repulsive ways? Moreover, he dwells in the midst of contamination, and remains free from contamination; he cleanses lepers, and is not tainted by leprosy; he looks into the graveyard of the human soul, and does not shudder at the ghastly

Digitized by Google

sight of corruption. This is nothing less than a miracle which the Lord works in His faithful servant. Supernatural aid is necessary to brave the difficulties and escape the dangers of the confessional. But the priest has the grace of state; he leans on the strong arm of his Master, and calls on Him for the required aid, which will never be denied.

"O blessed Lord! how much I need
Thy light to guide me on my way!
So many hands that, without heed,
Still touch Thy wounds, and make them bleed!
So many feet that, day by day,
Still wander from Thy fold astray!
Unless Thou fill me with Thy light
I cannot lead Thy flock aright;
Nor, without Thy support, can bear
The burden of so great a care,
But am myself a castaway!"—LONGFELLOW.

6. Despite difficulties and dangers, the office of a confessor is one of the most consoling and meritorious. A modern saint, John Baptist de Rossi, calls it the shortest road to heaven. St. James tells us that by it we secure for ourselves the mercy of God. *Scire debet quoniam qui converti fecerit peccatorem ab errore viae suae, salvabit animam ejus a morte, et operiet multitudinem peccatorum* (v. 20). Cardinal Manning mentions the confessional as one of the great helps of the priest, which more than counterbalances his dangers and temptations and ensures his advance in perfection. "We study moral theology in books, but there is no book so full of teaching as the confessional. The first time a priest sits in the tribunal of penance can hardly be forgotten. On either side come alternate voices, as it were from heaven and from hell. First comes the confession of a sinner black as night; next the confession of a child in baptismal innocence; after that a penitent truly contrite, followed by a soul ignorant of itself and its sinfulness; then come the poor, simple, and single of heart; after them worldlings, intriguers, and evi-

Digitized by Google

dent liars. All the treatises of the Salmanticenses canno. teach a priest what his confessional is always teaching. If he has the humility to learn, it will teach him five great truths: First, self-knowledge, by bringing things to his own remembrance, and by showing him his own face in a glass by the lives of sinners. Secondly, contrition, in the sorrow of penitents who will not be consoled. Thirdly, delicacy of conscience, in the innocent, whose eye being single, and their whole body full of light, accuse themselves of omissions and deviations from the will of God, which we, perhaps, daily commit without discernment. Fourthly, aspiration, by the fervent, whose one desire and effort, in the midst of burdened and restless homes, is to rise higher and higher in union with God. Fifthly, self-accusation at our own unprofitableness, from the generosity and fidelity of those who are hindered on every side, and yet in humility, self-denial, charity, and union with God surpass us, who have every gift of time and grace needed for perfection" (*Eternal Priesthood*).

7. The ministry of reconciliation demands acquirements and qualities which are necessary to its faithful and effective discharge. Moralists speak of the office of a confessor as *Pater*, *Judex* and *Medicus*. The Roman Ritual says: *In ejus ministerio requiritur bonitas, scientia atque prudentia.* He should possess the kindness of a father, the knowledge of a judge, and the prudence of a physician.

§ 26.

The Kindness of a Father.

1. *Ipse invocabit me: pater meus es tu* (Ps. lxxxviii. 27). With the endearing word *Father* the penitent begins his confession: "Bless me, *Father*, for I have sinned. I confess to Almighty God and to you, *Father;*" and

Digitized by Google

when the sad tale of sin is told, he concludes with confident hope by appealing to the kindness of a father: "I ask pardon of God, and penance and absolution of you, *my Father.*" And the good priest is touched at the outset with the filial confidence of the penitent. He recalls the parable of the Prodigal Son, in which Christ Himself reveals to us the fathomless love of the heart of the father, who with exuberant joy welcomes the returning wretch, starved, ragged, and tattered, and falls on his neck and covers him with tears and kisses,—simply because his child has come back, *quia hic mortuus erat, et revixit: perierat, et inventus est* (Luke xv. 32).

2. There is nothing sentimental or morbid in the love of a father; it is a strong, chaste, unselfish, generous, patient affection for his child. If you entertain such an affection for the sinner, you will be ready to help him at all times. *Semper tibi pendeat hamus; quo minime reris, gurgite piscis erit.* God's grace may direct him to you, and if you do not catch the fish, he may not *bite* again. Never refuse a stranger, no matter at what hour of the day or the night he may request you to hear his confession. Do not hesitate to hear at once people of the poor and lower classes, though their demand appears unreasonable and most unseasonable. Should you find it impossible to hear them on the spot, appoint the day and the hour when you will hear them with pleasure. *His sine mora, omni posthabito negotio, praesto sit; et in horam gratiam, si necesse sit, divites hujus saeculi, piosque ac devotos saepius confiteri solitos, praecipue autem mulieres, quibus tempus et otium abunde suppetit, aut negligat aut expectare jubeat, donec male habentibus, qui medico magis egent, fuerit satisfactum. Poenitentes leniter ac paterno more excipiat, et quamdiu a sacro Tribunali abfuerint, interroget; deinde peccata sua narrantes patienter audiat, neque (quod Rituale Romanum monet), unquam interpellet, nisi ad obscu-*

Digitized by Google

rius dicta melius intelligenda. Etiam atrocia facinora aut turpissima fatentes immoto vultu audiat; neque suspiriis, aut aliqua voce vel gestu, corporisve aut oris motu, mirantis aut horrescentis animi indicia prodat. Quinimmo poenitentem, si timore aut metu laborare deprehenderit, humanissimis verbis adloquatur; horteturque, ut bono animo et magna fiducia peccata omnia in sinum clementissimi Patris effundere non erubescat, summique Praeceptoris exemplo, proposito sibi gaudio, confusionem contemnat (Conc. Balt. II. 280).

3. Receive everybody with genuine kindness, and if you notice a timidity in the penitent, assist him to commence. "Is it a very long time since your last confession?" "Yes, Father." "Very good. It does not matter now; I am glad you are here. If you had been away for fifty years, it would make no difference to me, as I am determined to help you. You came to get rid of your sins, and God will surely forgive you all and everything. Have courage, and tell me all that is troubling your mind." Such remarks will open his heart. He knows that you wish to save his soul, and he surrenders himself to your kindness. Fear and discouragement vanish: he rejoices that he has found the heart of a father into which he may pour his sorrows and failures.

4. When you put on the stole of your priestly power, clothe yourself with a gentle and merciful spirit. *Induite vos viscera misericordiae, benignitatem, patientiam*" (Coloss. iii. 12). And if during the weary hours of confessions this spirit grows weak, then call for the Holy Spirit to "renew the right spirit within you." A harsh word or a slight rebuke may destroy the efforts which divine grace is making to bring forth the secrets of iniquity. "You must help and encourage and appear to make light of sin, and, like God Himself, to dissemble iniquity; for oftentimes the children are come to the birth, the sin is on

Digitized by Google

the sinner's lips—one impatient movement, a harsher tone of voice, seals them perhaps forever. *Venerunt filii usque ad partum*, sed *vires non habet parturiens* (Moriarty, *Allocutions*). A true father is lenient, without being over-indulgent. He does not approve of bad habits or wrong notions in his child. He always preserves the rights and dignity of a father. *Sit in me lenitas non remissa, asperitas non severa.*

5. The example of our divine Lord in receiving and treating sinners should be ever before us when we take His place in the confessional. *Studeat igitur Confessarius summam illam, qua Christus Dominus noster peccatores complecti solebat, clementiam ac benignitatem, quantum licet, aemulari. Homines enim quantumvis sceleribus cumulatissimos, caeterisque omnibus ob patrata crimina invisos et contemptos, Ipse numquam aspernabatur aut repellebat. Quod de se Ipse testatur his verbis: "Qui venit ad me, non ejiciam foras." Neque timendum est sacerdoti, ne Pastoris optimi hac in re exempla sectando muneri suo desit. . . . Et re quidem vera, qui Christi Domini in agendo cum peccatoribus patientiam et charitatem imitandam sibi proposuerit, is non reprehensionem et poenam, sed laudem ac praemium ab Eo feret, qui non ad bene habentes, sed ad aegros sanandos, in hunc mundum venit, quique "publicanorum ac peccatorum amicus" vocari dignatus est* (Conc. Balt. II. 284). A tender devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus will infuse into the priestly soul the merciful spirit of the Master.

6. No class of people will put the clemency of a Father-confessor to a severer trial than the scrupulous. They are the most unfortunate of all penitents. Generally, poor sinners leave the confessional with joy and peace in their hearts, but the scrupulous feel themselves more abandoned and wretched after confession than before. If the scruples are not produced by a merely physical cause, such

Digitized by Google

as affection of the brain, bad circulation of the blood, want of sufficient food, recreation, sleep, or pure air; if they are of a spiritual origin and are such as come from ignorance, pride, the devil, or divine permission,—the confessor must summon up all his courage and be determined to bear with these truly pitiable persons. There is only one specific remedy which will infallibly cure: blind obedience on the part of the penitent, and in the confessor the boundless patience and forbearance of a kind father.

§ 27.

The Knowledge of a Judge.

1. St. Alphonsus maintains that a priest who assumes the office of confessor without the required knowledge is *in statu damnationis*. He must know his moral theology. It does not suffice, for practical usefulness, to have passed a good examination in theology before leaving the seminary. The priest's intelligent studies begin with the exercise of his powers. He who abandons study abandons God and himself; and the consequences of such neglect are clearly announced by the prophet: *Quia tu scientiam repulisti, repellam te, ne sacerdotio fungaris mihi* (Osee iv. 6). A young physician who gives up the study of medicine and surgery will never become a successful practitioner. A young priest who leaves his books on the shelves as souvenirs of seminary life will never become a safe confessor.

2. Our memory is deceitful. We are liable to forget the little we once knew, unless we continually have recourse to study. Moreover, there is so much positive legislation for moral theology that natural sagacity and ingenuity will be insufficient. Constant study is necessary according to the master and prince of modern moralists: *Non facile*

Digitized by Google

sibi suadeant, quod satis idoneos ad tantum munus se reddere possint sine diuturno studio scientiae moralis; pro qua certe non sufficit aliquam percurrere summulam earum quae circumferuntur, nec satis est generalia principia hujus facultatis scire, ut quidam, qui casuistas contemnentes litteratorum arrogant sibi nomen, autumant (S. Lig. lib. vi. tract. 4, n. 628). And in his *Praxis Confessarii* the holy doctor says: *Nullus Confessarius intermittere debet theologiae moralis studium, quia ex tot rebus tam diversis et inter se disparibus, quae ad hanc scientiam pertinent, multa, quamvis lecta, quia rarius accidunt, temporis progressu e mente decidunt; qua de re oportet semper frequenti studio eas in memoriam revocare* (cap. i. § 3). Bishop Moriarty truly remarks: "We never turn over a chapter of our theology but it reminds us of something that was escaping our memory, or to which we were paying less attention." The harm caused by an ignorant confessor can scarcely be repaired. An ignorant confessor either overcharges the weak with burdens unbearable, crushing him or driving him into despair, or he lulls the careless into a false security in the midst of real danger.

3. A professor of moral theology who has not applied theory to practical cases in the confessional is likely to be a rigorist. But the longer and more varied his experience has been as a confessor, the milder will be his doctrines and opinions. The celebrated moralist of our own days who has made Gury's work so easy and practical, Father Ballerini, was during fifty years most zealous and assiduous in the confessional. There the priest receives his useful knowledge. "The priest who is faithful and patient as a father, a physician, and a judge of souls gains more in the living histories of sin and sorrow, contrition and conversion, sanctity and perfection in the confessional, than from all the books upon his shelves" (Cardinal Manning, l. c.). But his experience must be coupled with continued study;

Digitized by Google

theory and praxis must run parallel to avoid both laxism and rigorism. A good confessor never inclines to rigorism. Severity is relegated to mere speculation.

4. Know the extent of your faculties, especially in regard to reserved cases. Often read the printed faculties given you by the bishop. Consult wise and experienced men about difficult cases, or write to the professor who instructed you and perhaps understands you best. *Prudenti consilio peritorum studeat sibi comparare scientiam* (*Rit. Rom.*). You must know the generic distinction between mortal and venial sins, the circumstances which cause a specific distinction of sin, the impediments of marriage, the laws of natural justice, their violation and reparation, the occasions and remedies of sin. In all complicated cases you should know to doubt. *Sciat Confessarius, ubi securus non est, scienter dubitare* (St. Alph.). Reuter's *Neo-Confessarius* and St. Liguori's *Homo Apostolicus* will be of valuable and lasting assistance to the confessor.

5. Before arriving at a decision the confessor should have a clear insight into the conscience of the penitent before him. He shows his legal skill and his judicial knowledge in questioning or in the cross-examination of the penitent. The attempt to teach an adult the proper manner of confessing his sins generally proves a failure. Insist, however, that children confess as they were taught. With grown persons, especially those who come but seldom, take the case as it is presented to you. Be not discouraged if the penitent tells you that he does not remember the number nor the particulars of his sins. Assist him in telling all he can think of, and when he cannot call anything else to mind and you reasonably suspect other sins, then ask him about those sins that he likely forgot. But even with a penitent who confesses without the assistance of the confessor, it is well to put a few general questions: "Can you think of anything else? Is there anything of your past life

Digitized by Google

troubling you? Did you ever wilfully conceal a mortal sin?" Sometimes horrible stories answer such charitable questions. The grave opens and gives back its dead. A zealous confessor remarked that by a single question, which he usually put about the past life of the penitent, he gained more souls than he had hairs on his head. Presence of mind, combined with prudent acuteness and zeal for souls, must dictate the questions. The confessor must know *when* and *where* to ask. He must avoid all idle curiosity. *Ne examen sit curiosum de non necessariis, unde confessarii existimatio, sacramenti dignitas et poenitentis profectus minuatur* (St. Lig. lib. vi. n. 629). In materia turpi, melius est deficere interrogando quam scandalizari poenitentem. Cum conjugatis numquam absque gravi ratione mentionem faciat de debito conjugali. Graviter peccant conjugati, si quid agant, attentent vel admittant contra naturam vel finem matrimonii, scilicet duplici modo: pollutione voluntaria (Onanismo) et Sodomiae crimine. Alia peccata inter conjugatos, utpote venialia, non sunt materia necessaria Confessionis. De onanismo scribit clarissimus noster Sabetti: Quoniam apud nos (in America) plaga ista non tam altas et universas habet radices, prout alibi, melius forte erit deficere quam abundari in questionibus faciendis. The golden monition of St. Charles Borromeo should direct the confessor everywhere: *Caveat Confessarius ne curiosis aut inutilibus interrogationibus quemquam detineat, vel ne poenitens ab ipso Confessario, omnes sordium angulos vestigante, instructior redeat ad nequitiam.*

§ 28.

The Prudence of a Physician.

1. The divine injunction, *Estote prudentes sicut serpentes*, applies especially to the confessor. His ministry will

Digitized by Google

be fruitless unless he possesses prudence as a supernatural virtue. Prudence shows itself in the right application of general principles to the individual case. *Ad prudentiam pertinet non solum consideratio rationis, sed applicatio ad opus, quae est finis practicae rationis* (St. Thom. 2, ii. qu. 47, a. 3). Having constantly before his mind the object of his office, the salvation of souls, a prudent confessor will arrange his plans and words and all endeavors for this great purpose, and subordinate everything to this all-important aim and end—the conversion of sinners and their return to God.

2. A prudent confessor will treat every penitent according to his individual disposition and characteristics, following the example of the divine Master, who accommodated Himself to the wants and peculiarities of the different persons that sought His presence: *Diversas induit formas amor Dei*, as St. Bernard says. St. Paul copied the divine Model: *Omnibus omnia factus sum, ut omnes facerem salvos* (1 Cor. ix. 22). *Facti sumus parvuli in medio vestrum, tanquam si nutrix foveat filios suos* (1 Thess. ii. 7). The words of St. Augustine are a commentary on the apostolic rule: *Quia cum omnibus eadem debeatur caritas, non eadem omnibus adhibenda est medicina: ipsa enim caritas alios parturit, cum aliis infirmatur; alios curat aedificare, alios contremiscit offendere; ad alios se inclinat, ad alios se erigit: aliis blanda, aliis severa, nulli inimica, omnibus mater* (*De Catech. Rud.* c. xv. n. 23).

3. A physician's most important work consists in making the correct diagnosis of the case. Herein he shows his skill as an experienced doctor. Only when he has traced the origin of the sickness, its cause and nature, can he prescribe the proper remedies and order a consistent treatment of the patient. Thus the physician of the soul must ascertain what kind of a case of spiritual disease he

Digitized by Google

has to treat, what dominant passion is the chief cause of his penitent's desolate condition. The penitent may have violated many commandments and be guilty of many sins: one evil, however, predominates in him, to which he inclines more than to any other, and that sin is his *passio dominans*, which the confessor must detect in order to understand the case and cure it. Other diseases cannot be overlooked; but they are secondary, and frequently mere consequences of the predominant malady. Sometimes the confessor must even bear with a lesser evil to eradicate the greater one, according to the theological axiom: *Levia permittenda, ut graviora subtrahantur.*

4. A prudent physician will avoid all that might lessen the respect and confidence that patients place in his skill. Thus the confessor must be exceedingly prudent in his relations with his penitents. Be kind to everybody, familiar with nobody. *Cave a quocumque scandalo, etiam pharisaico. Valde imprudenter ageret ille Confessarius, qui saepe visitaret familiam, caeteroquin honestam, ubi sunt puellae; vel si visitaret mulierem juniorem in absentia sui mariti, licet mulier ista foret pia et honestissima; inde oriuntur dicteria, detractiones et quidem calumniae; talia enim peccata non audent postea confiteri ipsi sacerdoti.*

5. With a sore and wounded heart the penitent kneels at the feet of the confessor, who, like a competent physician, pours the oil of consolation into it. He realizes himself how hard it is to make a sincere confession of loathsome diseases; he does not add to the misery of the sinner by scolding or hurrying him. He prudently conceals the gravity of the case and rouses the sinking hope of the despondent. He puts the right words on the lips that will shortly bless him for his dexterity. With an imperturbable calmness he examines serious and fatal wounds,

Digitized by Google

and treats each case as if it were the only one in the world he is attending. Do not show undue haste, because you have to say Mass, or because of the large number waiting outside. Such reasons will not excuse from the integrity of confession, nor will they always satisfy the penitent. If you have no time to hear a confession quietly, delay it. Do not hurry during the last hour, which is generally the most important. *Forsan inter ultimos est quidam Nicodemus, qui ideo tarde et in nocte venit, ut possit bene confiteri.*

6. The Roman Ritual mentions those to whom absolution must be denied: *Quales sunt, qui nulla dant signa doloris; qui odia et inimicitias deponere, aut aliena, si possint, restituere, aut proximam peccandi occasionem deserere, aut alio modo peccata derelinquere, et vitam in melius emendare nolunt; aut qui publicum scandalum dederunt, nisi publice satisfaciant et scandalum tollant.* But a prudent confessor, aided by divine grace, will generally succeed in disposing the penitent to real sorrow and purpose of amendment. He will effect in two or three minutes what the poor sinner could not accomplish in so many days. Therefore courageously attack the apparently insurmountable obstacle, and it may not happen once in a year that you have to refuse absolution, though you sometimes may advise abstinence from holy communion. It is related of St. Alphonsus that he *never* sent a sinner away from confession without absolution. Never shirk a troublesome case. "And even when you find that, on account of past sacrileges, the whole thread of a long life has to be unravelled, do not be disturbed, do not defer your penitent to another time, take the work boldly and generously into your own hands. If you possess the skill and tact which your art requires, the confession of a life may be as short as the confession of a month" (Moriarty, l. c.). But if you fail to bring about the necessary dispositions and are

Digitized by Google

obliged to put back a sinner, do it so gently and prudently that he will be convinced of his unworthiness to receive absolution and will blame only himself. *Quinimo iis etiam significet ac persuadeat, se aegre quidem et invitum, nec nisi sacri muneris officio bonique eorum spiritualis amore cogi ut absolutionem differat; eos deinde quam humanissimis verbis soletur atque erigat; horteturque, ut quo adhuc carent, cor bonum et optimum, cor novum creandum in ipsis a Deo perpetuis precibus efflagitent: denique, ad quamprimum redeundum blandissime alliciat* (Conc. Balt. II. 287).

7. Prudent discrimination should be observed in imposing the penance which is given for a double reason: *Ad novae vitae remedium et infirmitatis medicamentum, et ad praeteritorum peccatorum castigationem* (*Rit. Rom.*). The penance is either medicinal or vindictive; the medicinal penance is generally preferable. Give a severe penance, if necessary, but always a possible one. Give it for a short period—not for many days, or even weeks; the penitent easily forgets it, and then is afraid to return to you. Be careful in giving the Stations of the Cross for a penance; it is rather a public devotion, and would attract attention in many places; besides, it is a difficult devotion for some. Be prudent in giving penance from the prayer-book, as some cannot read and are not anxious to confess their illiteracy. *Caveat Confessarius, ne poenitentiam, quae sine maxima difficultate fieri non possit, imponat; aut quam prudenter judicat fore, ut poenitens nequeat aut nolit exequi. Neque id, quod ab Ecclesiae consuetudine maxime abhorret, temere exigat, ut poenitentiae opera peragenda sint, antequam absolutio impertiatur* (Conc. Balt. II. 289).

8. Sacredly guard the sacramental seal which the wisdom of God has placed on your lips. *Itaque, regii vatis exemplo, ponat ori suo custodiam, et ostium circumstantiae*

Digitized by Google

labiis suis, ne sacrosanctam hanc legem vel in minimis violare videatur (Conc. Balt. II. 290). A prudent confessor will avoid the very appearance of violating the *sigillum.* Be careful when a woman asks about the confession of her husband, son, or daughter: you know nothing. *Quando sponsus confitetur peccata commissa cum sponsa et post sponsum accedit sponsa quae de iis tacet, tunc nequit Confessarius uti scientia ex confessione hausta. Liceret tamen dicere sponso ut loquatur cum sponsa, antequam ipsa confessionem peragat et ei dicat se peccatum in confessione sincere exposuisse.* Never say or certify in writing that you gave absolution to such a one. Do not say: Such a person has been to confession to me this evening; I visited N. N., who is sick, and gave him absolution; she cried in the confessional; she is scrupulous, ignorant, has to suffer from her husband. Give the blessing when you do not give absolution. Do not drag a deaf person to the sacristy *during* confession. Do not easily make use of permissions given, especially by a woman, to speak outside the confessional *de peccatis confessis. Facile est limites excedere vel decipi.*

9. There is undoubtedly a marked difference of character between the two sexes and various ages of mankind. Pastoral prudence cannot overlook this difference in the treatment of the different classes of people who present themselves at the holy tribunal with their peculiar ills and wants, demanding appropriate care from the Father-confessor. We shall therefore speak of the confessions of men, women, children, and pious persons, following the excellent plan and suggestions of Frassinetti in his *Practical Manual.*

Digitized by Google

§ 29.

Confessions of Men.

1. It is all-important that the men of your congregation frequently come to confession. The grace of God cannot be where confession is regarded as the special duty of the devout sex. Men make no profession of piety; they are rather rebellious against the practice of religion, leaving it, if possible, to the women folks. And yet with zeal and tact a priest will succeed in bringing men to confession once a month, and in thereby making them sober, honest, industrious, and practical members of the Church.

2. Do not keep men waiting when they come to confession. In church men are shy and timid; they feel more comfortable in the rear than in front; they come in last and leave first. Women, on the contrary, push themselves forward in church as if they owned it. They often keep men away from the confessional by their bold manœuvres. Have one side of the confessional exclusively for men, the other for women. When there is a large crowd of both men and women waiting, as on the eve of a great feast, hear all the men present first. Women have more patience; mothers and daughters are willing to wait until the men are heard.

3. Show that you are really pleased when men are at your confessional. Make them feel that you consider it a privilege and pleasure to hear the confessions of men. No matter what class of men they are, rich or poor, ignorant or learned, young or old, receive them with the utmost kindness and affection, and make them love you. While avoiding everything bordering on affection and sentimentality with persons of the opposite sex, the con-

Digitized by Google

fessor should cultivate and entertain the affection of men. If they love and respect him, he may do with them as he likes.

4. Do not lay down any rules of piety and perfection for the ordinary class of men, but be satisfied if they shun mortal sin and keep the commandments. A sour ascetic will accomplish nothing with them. Be open, frank, indulgent, and mild with them, without surrendering one principle of theology. Spare no effort, with such men as come indisposed, to instruct, exhort, and dispose them for the grace of absolution. In America it rarely happens that a man comes to confession without a full determination to change his life. And the good will of a man is an important step towards real conversion.

§ 30.

Confessions of Women.

1. A DANGEROUS rock which the priest encounters in the stormy sea of the world is the hearing of women's confessions. The knowledge of this fact and a sense of dread are his best safeguard. He must persevere in a state of indifference and insensibility towards female penitents; he must keep his heart hermetically sealed against human sentiments of affection and avoid every sign of familiarity, though cherishing a holy respect and reverence for the sex of our mothers. Woman needs the sacraments more frequently than man. Her good influence in the home-circle is of the highest value for the faith and morality of those who come in daily contact with her. Her presence should spread about her the perfume of Christian devotion and charity. It is the duty of a confessor to cultivate the virtues of humility and purity in the queenly heart of the

Digitized by Google

Catholic woman and to fit her for the exalted position which Mary, the Mother of Jesus, won for her in the Church of her Son.

2. Guard your eyes: *Averte oculos tuos, ne videant vanitatem.* The eyes are the windows of the soul; close them to keep sensuality aloof. Do not look at a female penitent either before, during, or after confession. It would be injurious to you and others for several reasons. *Non permittas illas ante confessionale accedere, ut tibi loquantur, et multo minus, ut manus deosculentur. In actu confessionis non ostendat, se eas agnoscere* (St. Alph.). Guard your tongue; never use expressions of friendship and familiarity; put the fewest possible questions. With young women observe the advice of St. Augustine: *Sermo brevis et rigidus cum his mulieribus habendus est; nec tamen quia sanctiores, ideo minus cavendae; quo enim sanctiores sunt, eo magis alliciant.* St. Liguori says: *Cum junioribus in confessionario sis potius rigidus quam suavis.* Speak to a woman in the confessional as if you were addressing her spirit, separated from the body and standing before the judgment-seat of God. Be kind and respectful to old women, especially if they are afflicted with deafness or some infirmity peculiar to their age. *Obsecra anus ut matres* (1 Tim. v. 2).

3. Do not permit them to tell more than their sins, and check garrulity. *Piarum praecipue mulierc ularum garrulitatem graviter ac moderate coerceat* (Conc. Balt. II. 281). Be not deceived by tears: they may be sincere, but women's tears are always cheap and handy. Frequently raise your heart to Mary Immaculate that it may not be moved by human sentiment. St. Alphonsus gives another important advice: *Abstineant Confessarii a munusculis recipiendis, et praecipue ad illarum domus non accedant.*

Digitized by Google

§ 31.

Confessions of Children.

1. Special attention must be given to the confessions of children. Confession is the most effective and shortest way to bring children to Jesus, *the children's Friend.* It is a laborious task for the priest, but his holy affection for the little ones will lighten the burden. In the confessional he will eradicate the first seeds of vice from the young hearts; there he will plant the flowers of virtue which will bear rich blossoms. He will give them every opportunity of going to confession at frequent and regular intervals. In many busy city parishes Friday afternoon after school is set aside for their confessions, the girls in the lower classes being heard on one Friday, the boys on the next, the girls in the higher classes on the third and the boys on the fourth Friday.

2. The children must be especially prepared for confession by the priest himself, who alone is capable of teaching them the correct and proper manner to avail themselves of the Sacrament of Penance. Do not leave this work of preparation to anybody else, not even to brothers and sisters, though they may be of great assistance. A priest only can impart a proper knowledge of the essential points of penance and inculcate the right way of telling the sins in confession. He should instruct the children on three consecutive days previous to every confession; but those who come for the first time must receive a special drilling for their first confession.

3. Teach them how to examine their consciences.*

* The following examination of conscience will be found useful for children.

How long is it since your last confession? Did you receive absolution? Did you do your penance? Did you tell all the mortal sins you

Digitized by Google

Tell them to observe the following directions for making their confessions: When you rise from your place to go to the priest, walk slowly, the hands joined and the eyes cast down. On entering the confessional kneel down, and, when the priest is ready to hear you, say: *Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.* Then make the sign of the cross whilst the priest is blessing you, and continue: *I confess to Almighty God, and to you, Father, that I have sinned.* Then say: *Since my last confession, which was . . . ago, I accuse myself of . . .* Here name the sins which you remember to have committed since your last confes-

remembered in your last confession? Have you wilfully concealed a mortal sin?

(Be sure and tell the priest how many times you committed each sin.)

Examine yourself on the Ten Commandments as follows:

FIRST COMMANDMENT.

Have you denied your religion? Have you doubted in matters of faith? Have you spoken against the Catholic Church or holy things? Have you neglected to say your prayers? Have you laughed and talked in church before the Blessed Sacrament? Have you gone to fortune-tellers? Have you believed in dreams?

SECOND COMMANDMENT.

Have you taken the holy name of God without necessity and reverence? Have you sworn by the holy name of God, or the adorable name of Jesus Christ? Have you called down God's name on people when you were angry? Have you caused others to curse or swear? Have you made a vow and broken it?

THIRD COMMANDMENT.

Have you wilfully neglected to hear Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation? Have you been late for Mass by your own fault? Have you talked and gazed about during Mass instead of praying? Have you done unnecessary work on Sundays or holydays of obligation? Have you kept the Fridays and fast-days?

FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

Have you disobeyed your parents, or given them trouble? Have you despised them and wished them evil? Have you mocked or even cursed them? Have you not prayed for them or assisted them in their needs? Have you been ashamed of them on account of their poverty? Have you

Digitized by Google

sion, stating the number of times in the day, week, or month that each sin was committed. After having confessed all your sins, say: *For these and all other sins which I cannot now remember I am heartily sorry, and humbly ask pardon of God, and penance and absolution of you, my Father.* Listen attentively and humbly to the advice of your confessor, and be fully resolved to obey him, and to do better in the future. Pay good attention to the penance he imposes on you. And when you notice that he is about to give you absolution, when he raises his right hand, devoutly bow your head, and fervently recite

been disobedient to your teachers? Have you been disrespectful and disobedient to your priests?

FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

Have you been angry and not tried to suppress your anger? Have you made others angry? Have you wished the death of others? Have you desired to take revenge on others? Have you refused to speak to anybody? Have you injured your health by excess in eating or drinking? Have you been unkind to the poor and sick?

SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS.

Have you wilfully dwelt on impure thoughts? Have you taken pleasure in looking at bad objects and representations? Have you listened willingly to impure words, or ever spoken bad words yourself? Have you been guilty of any actions against holy purity? Have you read bad books and papers and lent them to others? Have you gone to forbidden amusements?

SEVENTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS.

Have you stolen money? How much? What else did you steal? Have you made up for what you stole? Have you returned the stolen goods? Have you cheated anybody? Have you paid what you owed? Have you helped others to steal? Have you returned what you found, knowing to whom it belonged? Have you wasted things not belonging to you? Have you idled your time, and caused others to waste their time?

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

Have you told lies? Have you injured anybody by telling lies? Have you taken an oath contrary to the truth? Have you spoken about the faults of your neighbors?

Digitized by Google

your *Act of Contrition* in a low tone of voice, so as not to distract the priest. Do not leave before he has made the sign of the cross over you and given you a signal to withdraw. During the whole confession, as long as you are with the priest, never raise your eyes, never look him in the face, but remain all the time with your hands joined and your eyes cast down. When the priest asks you something, do not look at him, but answer sincerely, candidly, and with few words. Do not tell any one what the priest has told or asked you in confession; it is for you alone and nobody else. It might easily be misunderstood by others. Return to your place in the way you left it. Stay for a little while in church and say the prayers after confession (from a prayer-book, if you can read), and perform your penance, if possible. The priest must insist that the children know and observe these given directions.

4. It is a great mistake to put children merely through the form of confession and withholding absolution from them until they are ready to make their First Communion. All excuses or reasons for such *untheological* conduct are null and void. What nonsense to make children tell a few sins, and then to say: *Now, that's a good boy. Come to Sunday-school. Be good to your parents. Don't curse or steal. Say for your penance three Our Fathers. Benedictio, etc.!* As a rule, a child of seven years is capable of committing sin and, therefore, of receiving absolution. It is ridiculous to oblige children to confess their sins to obtain a simple blessing. Such an absurd proceeding looks like a parody of the sacrament.

5. Help children in making their confessions, especially in telling their sins. Remember, however, that people are bound to confess proportionately to their capacity. A priest must confess theologically and correctly, an intelligent man intelligently, a child in a childlike way. And as long as a child confesses as well as he can, his confession

Digitized by Google

will be good, no matter how confusedly and even comically he may tell his peccadilloes. Make children tell the number, even of venial sins, so as to accustom them to be exact during their life.

6. It is no sign of want of contrition when the child plays with the grating, looks around, appears happy and joyous when the tale is told. Besides, children are easily, with a few words, moved to contrition. They have no actual attachment to sin, as a rule; and so it is easy to give them absolution. Nor is there any great amount of knowledge required in children; they soon have an idea of the essentials.

7. Never scold a child or interrupt him harshly. On the contrary, when you notice timidity or bashfulness promise him that you will neither scold not get angry, but will help him through. Encourage the silent by mentioning a big sin which he certainly did not commit: Did you steal a horse? Did you kill a fellow? If the child is the victim of some fiend, then prudently use the necessary remedies. "Betrayed innocence deserves the first consideration, and when we do not know any other effective means to protect it, we must not pay any heed to disagreeable consequences," even in families, yes, even between husband and wife (cf. Frassinetti's *Manual*, p. 381).

8. Use the utmost prudence and discretion in questioning children *de sexto*. Do not teach evil. It is often better to be silent on this matter, and to permit a defective integrity in the juvenile confession. "The child is not bound to confess better than he knows, nor is it lawful for the confessor to instruct him on this subject" (Frassinetti, l. c.). *Sedulo caveat, ne imprudenter interrogando efficiat, ut maximo innocentiae periculo ea discant, quae eorum aetatem ignorare praestat* (Conc. Balt. II. 281).

Digitized by Google

§ 32.

Confessions of Pious Persons.

1. In almost every congregation there are a certain number of people who distinguish themselves through greater piety and fervor than the rest. God calls some of these people to a higher degree of perfection, and the priest must give them his special attention as confessor and treat them exceptionally. A general rule should fix the days of confession for the different classes of the community: on the first Saturday of the month, confession for married women; on the second Saturday, for the men, married and single; on the third Saturday, for the young women; on the fourth Saturday, for the children who have made their First Communion. The pious people cannot be relegated to the occasional fifth Saturday, but ought to receive special treatment.

2. Hear the pious people once every week, and no more. There are some silly women who would go to confession daily, if there were a priest silly enough to hear them. They are regular ninnies, especially when they are young and giddy. A priest has to be exceedingly careful of his reputation, especially if the piety of such *chosen* souls is not solid or real. Sensuality sometimes puts on a pious mien. *Non raro latet sub praetextu pietatis virus libidinis: experto crede: expertus loquor: vidi cedros Libani turpiter corruisse, de quorum sanctitate non magis quam de Hieronymi dubitassem* (St. Aug.).

3. Spend very little time in hearing such confessions. A few sensible words on common-sense Christianity, on a truly Christian life, or recommending a pious book, will be of practical value to them, more than a perfumed talk

Digitized by Google

on the sweetness of asceticism. Men may be waiting for their confessions, and one man at the confessional is worth ninety-nine pious women. Strive to keep pious persons of the devout sex humble and simple-minded; otherwise they will soon join the celebrated *Devotulae*, the target of our moralists.

4. Do not bind them to daily meditation, but require the practice of prayer and frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Exact some ordinary works of mortification, temperance in eating and drinking, shortening the hours of sleep, abstinence from certain dainties and fineries of dress, bearing patiently with the troubles of life, practising silence, and all such mortifications which will not injure their health. Do not permit them to practise the austerities of some saint or to undergo extraordinary penances. "To practise penances of this kind, without an evident divine inspiration, is simply to tempt God" (Frassinetti). Let them do common things uncommonly well; above all, let them be blindly obedient to your orders.

5. Sometimes, and in places where he least expects it, a priest may meet with a soul which receives extraordinary favors from God. *Spiritus ubi vult spirat.* All centuries, all nations, and all classes of people have had their saints, and will have them until the end of time. If during your priestly career you should come across such a case, then be neither too credulous nor too sceptical: ask the advice of a learned and holy man, and consult some works on mystic and ascetic theology. The characteristics of a saint are deep humility, blind obedience, dove-like simplicity, and a complete detachment from things of earth. These virtues, however, are not incompatible in living saints with some defects and lingering imperfections

Digitized by Google

§ 33.

General Confession.

1. A GENERAL confession is a confession of the whole life. When you are asked to hear a general confession, carefully examine the reasons *pro* and *contra*. If a general confession be necessary or advisable, give the penitent a few practical hints about the examination of conscience, and impress him with the necessity of a sincere contrition; appoint a special time for him, if possible, and exhort him to prepare by prayer, reflection, and retirement.

2. A general confession is necessary if past confessions have been sacrilegious through want of integrity, contrition, etc. It is advisable at a change of a state of life, such as at First Communion, at marriage, or on entering a convent or seminary. The reasons for advisability are, to convince the sinner of his unworthiness of receiving special favors from God, to produce humility in the heart, and a desire to lead a truly penitent and mortified life; also, to fervently adore the mercy of the Lord: *Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo* (Ps. lxxxviii. 2).

A general confession is objectionable, because hurtful, if it be desired through mere curiosity or scrupulosity. At a mission, people sometimes ask to make a general confession to a "holy father" whose absolution they consider better than that of an ordinary priest. Besides, after hearing a mission sermon on confession, people through sheer fright often imagine that they never made a good confession in their whole life. The scrupulous become more entangled and more desperate by a general confession. In all cases where a general confession is not necessary, and where it would disturb pious souls by tearing up old wounds and sores and also defile the memory, it should be strictly forbidden.

Digitized by Google

3. Tell the penitent at the very beginning to pluck up courage, that you will take all the labor of the general confession upon yourself, and require of him only to be sincere in telling and to be sorry for all. And even in this matter also you will help him by asking him to answer simply *yes* or *no* to your questions. Tell him to avoid useless stories and excuses, and put him as the first questions: How old are you? What are you doing for a living? Are you married or single? Are your parents living? When did you make your First Communion? When were you confirmed? How often were you in the habit of going to confession? Convince him that as long as he omits nothing through malice or culpable negligence, but confesses in an humble and contrite spirit, his confession will be good though he should forget many things. Then ask him about those sins which cause the greatest shame and humble him the most: *peccata luxuriae.* After he has answered your different questions, pause for a moment and make him consider the heinousness and degrading nature of the sins of impurity which so many times deserved hell, where he would surely end were it not for the infinite mercy of God, who waited for his return and is now willing to cancel all. "The penitent being thus humbled from the very beginning of his confession, being filled with horror at the number of his sins, and impressed with a due sense of God's great mercy towards Him, will thereby be excellently disposed to continue his confession in that spirit of compunction which is necessary, and which you must endeavor to increase more and more after the enumeration of each species of sins" (Salvatori, *Instruction for New Confessors*, p. 295). Then you may continue the examination by following the order of the Ten Commandments and those of the Church.

4. When the sins have been told, the confessor's duty is to excite the penitent to sincere sorrow and a firm pur-

Digitized by Google

pose of amendment. This is not so difficult a task as it may appear at first sight, if we have a clear idea of the true sorrow required according to the doctrine of the Church. "The sorrow for sin consists in the decision of the will, which detests past crimes, and wishes not to commit any in the future. Therefore, in order to have true contrition, there is no need of tears, or sighs, or sensible tenderness. Indeed, it is possible to have a holy and justifying contrition while in a state of the greatest aridity, bordering even on insensibility. Have no anxiety on this point. Never make an effort to excite contrition. An effort produces confusion and trouble of mind, but never contrition. On the contrary, keep your heart tranquil. Tell your God lovingly that you would wish never to have offended Him, and that with His assistance you wish never to offend Him again: this is contrition. Contrition is an effect of love, and love always works quietly. St. Francis de Sales says that an act of contrition is the work of a moment, and is made by casting two glances; one upon ourselves, detesting sin, the other on God, promising amendment and hoping for assistance from Him" (Words of Father Quadrupani, quoted by Salvatori, l. c. p. 312).

5. It is not profitable to divide the work of a general confession, by hearing a portion of it to-day, another to-morrow, and so on, until the whole story is completed. It will be less worry to both confessor and penitent to finish everything at one sitting. The confessor must go to work courageously, and present a complete picture of iniquities to the penitent, who can be easier moved by a single glance at the whole picture than by gazing at different parts of the same. A fervent *Ave* to Mary, "the refuge of sinners," will sustain his courage, and the consciousness of finding the lost sheep fill his heart with joyful patience.

Digitized by Google

§ 34.

Remedies.

1. The perspicacity of a good confessor shows itself in the prescription and application of the proper remedies for the prevention or cure of the different diseases of the human soul. A skilful physician accomplishes more by preventing sickness than by curing it. A confessor must use preventive as well as curative remedies. The two most important of general remedies were given by our divine Lord in the Garden of Olives: *Vigilate et orate.* Watch the approach of the enemy and ward him off by prayer. These remedies are within the reach of everybody at all times. Teach the penitent to speak to God as a child talks to his father, to cry for divine help at the hour of temptation, to make frequent aspirations to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to Mary his Mother, St. Joseph, his guardian angel and patron saint; to recite morning and evening prayers, to say the Rosary; to say the act of contrition immediately after relapsing into sin and to promise to go to confession as soon thereafter as possible. Good reading produces a wonderful effect, as we know from the story of so many converts. "The reading of pious books is, for seculars, one of the best spiritual medicines that can be prescribed. It is for them meditation in its easiest form. Now our people are fast becoming a reading people, and hence, when the capacity and education of the penitent allow it, I would think it most advisable to enjoin some minutes of daily spiritual reading.... This practice will tend to spread religious books, and to introduce them into the family-circle" (Bishop Moriarty, l. c.).

2. After these general remedies, we briefly indicate *

* We warmly recommend Salvatori's little book, *Instruction for New Confessors.* English-speaking priests owe a debt of gratitude to the

Digitized by Google

special ones against three evils that most commonly present themselves to the confessor: Cursing and blaspheming, drunkenness, impurity. The first of these sins may be called the national sin of America, and the confessor must make a special effort to root it out. The most effective remedies against CURSING and BLASPHEMING are:

(*a*) Bridling the tongue and stifling anger. Never speak when you are angry; wait until you are cool.

(*b*) A pecuniary penalty after each curse or blasphemy, v.g., ten cents for the poor.

(*c*) Prayer for those whom you have cursed.

(*d*) Devotion to the Holy Name; frequent recitation of the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus; joining a society of the Holy Name.

Remedies against DRUNKENNESS:

(*a*) Consideration of the heinousness and degradation of intemperance, and its evil consequences in ruining soul and body.

(*b*) Devotion to the sacred thirst of Christ; wearing of a special medal.

(*c*) Good food, less work and anxiety. Medical aid. The so-called gold-cure seems to be a failure.

(*d*) Joining a well-conducted temperance society.

(*e*) Temperance pledge; but for those who cannot drink temperately, the pledge of total abstinence.

Remedies against IMPURITY:

(*a*) Frequent reflection on the angelic loveliness of purity and on the turpitude of the opposite vice.

(*b*) Avoid the occasion of sin. You may have to give up a great deal; leave your business, change your residence, lose money: rather lose everything than lose your immortal soul. *Si oculus tuus scandalizat te, erue eum et projice abs te* (Matt. xviii. 9).

Very Rev. Dr. Hutch for his excellent translation of this as well as of Frassinetti's *Manual*.

Digitized by Google

(*c*) Shun idleness. Be always occupied with something.

(*d*) Mortification: guard your senses; lead a severe life; be temperate in eating, drinking, and sleeping.

(*e*) Frequent thoughts of death and judgment. Visits to the sick, dying, and dead.

(*f*) Frequent communion, a tender devotion to Mary Immaculate. "It is the boast of the Catholic religion that it has the gift of making the young heart chaste; and why is this, but that it gives us Jesus Christ for our food and Mary for our nursing mother?" (Newman.)

§ 35.

Admonitions.

1. Words spoken in the confessional go directly to the heart; they are generally more effective than a sermon or instruction. Things which you are never allowed to mention in a sermon can be driven home in the confessional. Here you can be practical; you need not generalize, but you can directly come to the sore, cut, dress, and heal it. Your words must banish the darkness of ignorance and raise the drooping heart. *Fiat lux!* Let the rays of divine grace fall upon the soul, and with its sunshine, warmth and happiness will return. Let your words come from a heart burning with the sympathetic love of Christ for the poor sinner: *Docebo iniquos vias tuas: et impii ad te convertentur* (Ps. l. 15). Every sinner has his own story, his own peculiar character and inclinations to evil; words will suit him that will not fit another. A few general directions, however, may be useful for a new confessor, who is often at a loss what to say.

2. Show the sinner how he has strayed away from the

Digitized by Google

summum bonum by leading him back to the innocent days of his childhood when he was beloved by God and His holy angel. Had he then died, he would have gone directly to heaven, where he now would be happy with the saints.

3. Go at once to the root of the evil, to the *passio dominans*, to the cardinal sin of the penitent, be it impurity, intemperance, sloth, selfishness, or some other wicked captain who domineers in the soul. All the other sins group around the leader. Do not speak about all the sins confessed; simply knife the lion, kill the captain.

4. To the rough and sensual character give a vivid description of the fatal consequences of his sins. Do not dwell on the temporal evils that follow his sins; they generally make little impression on such an individual. But show him his death-bed, the Last Judgment, and hell open. What would you do now if you had to appear this evening before your Maker? Where would you be at this moment if you had died last night with these sins upon your soul? But despair not: God is merciful, though just.

5. Represent to him the hideousness of his crimes, which have deformed his character and have almost become his second nature. He was once good and holy and happy. How deeply he has fallen! *Quomodo cecidisti de coelo, Lucifer, qui mane oriebaris?* (Is. xiv. 12.) How low and mean, nay, how vile and beastly, he has become through his sins!

6. Show him how he treated his God and Father. For a filthy thought, for a base pleasure, for a few dollars, for a glass of whiskey, to please a false friend, he has renounced his God. He has again crucified his Lord and Master, as the Apostle distinctly declares: *Rursum crucifigentes sibimetipsis Filium Dei, et ostentui habentes* (Heb. vi. 6).

7. Inspire courage and confidence by pointing out the possibility of conversion. Diffidence rises in the soul of

Digitized by Google

the sinner at the thought of his iniquities, at seeing himself the slave of his passions for so long a time. He has often tried but invariably fell. Assure him that he finally will succeed, that his will strengthened by divine grace is all-powerful. Others, of the same clay and with the same temptations, won the battle; why should he be vanquished? Refute all the excuses advanced by him, and show him the way out of his great difficulties.

8. Ask him who confesses sacrilegious communions, which sin he considers the most grievous of all those he has just now confessed. Most likely he will mention the sin which he was ashamed to confess before. Explain to him the greater crime of a sacrilege. Show the abominable perfidy and blackest ingratitude of an unworthy communion, and ask him to repair it as much as lies within him by the most reverent love for the Adorable Eucharist and a frequent and devout reception of the same.

9. Young people can be moved by questions like these: Who loves you most in this world? Who thinks of you day and night? Who has done the most good for your soul and body? Is there anybody in your family or among your friends who would die simply out of love for you?

10. Examine the ground on which you are standing. You have told me all and well; but tell me honestly, what, in God's name, you now intend to do? Will you continue thus? Certainly not; you feel disgusted with yourself, I am sure. You intend to stop, and to turn a new leaf. You are through with the devil.

11. Your sins are great, but the mercy of God is greater. God kept you alive, and now gives you this chance to make a good confession and to be forgiven. He wants you to be pardoned; He loves you still. Ah! He not only forgives your sins, but He even forgets them.

Digitized by Google

You come in here a sinner, but you leave this confessional a saint. Put all your trust in Him.

Qui Mariam absolvisti,
Et latronem exaudisti,
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.

12. If the penitent is a brother priest, do not dismiss him without some words of admonition. All personal feelings of friendship or human respect must be laid aside, for the moment: he confesses to you as the representative of the great High-Priest. Your words will be sacred to him, though he may be better and more experienced than you. He needs words of practical advice and warning more even than a layman. What a priest generally needs most are a few kind words of encouragement to cheer him in his daily work, to banish ignoble weariness from his lonely heart, and to spur him to heroic sacrifices for the blessed Master.

§ 36.

Indulgences.

1. In the Sacrament of Penance sins are forgiven and the eternal punishment due to them, but not always the entire temporal punishment. This remaining part of temporal punishment must be paid, either in this life by suffering and works of penance, or in the next in the fire of purgatory. There is an easier way, however, by which the debt of temporal punishment is cancelled—that of gaining indulgences. Clement VI., in his bull *Unigenitus*, clearly teaches what the Catholic Church understands by indulgences: "Jesus Christ, through the superabundant merits of His passion, left to the Church militant here on earth an infinite treasure, not hidden in a napkin, nor buried in a field; but He intrusted it to the blessed Peter, who bears the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and to his

Digitized by Google

successors, the vicars of Jesus Christ on earth, to be dispensed to the faithful for their spiritual good. The merits of the blessed Mother of God, and of all the elect, from the first just man to the last, go to make up the fulness of this treasure."

2. Teach the people to prize the benefits and efficacy of indulgences, and exhort them to a holy eagerness to gain all indulgences possible, both *partial* and *plenary*, for the good of their own souls and the relief of their suffering brethren in purgatory. *Doceant etiam, quo grati animi affectu, quo mentis obsequio ac pietate excipienda sint munificentissima haec Dei et Ecclesiae matris dona, quae in nos miseros homunciones, quorum nulla sunt merita, e thesauris coelestibus effunduntur* (Conc. Balt. II. 301).

3. It belongs to the priestly office to be well informed on the nature and practical use of indulgences, and to announce to the people whenever they might gain them. Frequently consult those who have written on indulgences *ex professo*. One of the following books seems indispensable to a priest on the mission: *The Raccolta*, translated and published by the Jesuit Fathers of Woodstock College; *Le Chrétien éclairé sur la nature et l'usage des Indulgences*, par le Rév. P. Antoine Maurel, S.J., translated into German by Father Schneider; *Die Ablaesse*, von Franz Beringer, S.J.; *Florilegium*, auctore De Schrevel, Brugis Flandrorum.

4. The necessary conditions for the gaining of an indulgence are: (*a*) the *state of grace*. The clause *corde saltem contrito* means that one in the state of mortal sin must make at least an act of true contrition with the purpose of going to confession in order to gain the indulgence. (*b*) A general *intention* of gaining the indulgence. It is advisable to renew this intention every morning. (*c*) A faithful and personal *performance of the works* enjoined, with an exact observance of time, manner, place, and end.

Digitized by Google

"But the most important condition for gaining a plenary indulgence is to have a true hatred for all sins, even venial, and to be wholly free from any attachment to them. This condition is absolutely necessary; for, as St. Alphonsus teaches, it is certain that so long as the guilt of venial sin is not remitted the punishment due to it cannot be remitted. So that whilst the soul bears the guilt of a single venial sin, or even any actual attachment to sin, it is clear that it cannot obtain the total remission of its punishment, or, in other words, a plenary indulgence; for a plenary indulgence is nothing more nor less than the complete remission of the temporal punishment due to sin, of which the guilt has been already remitted. Hence the great importance, for those who desire to gain a plenary indulgence, of striving to stir up in their hearts a sincere sorrow, not only for mortal sins, whereof the guilt has already been remitted, but even for each and every venial sin" (Introduction to *Raccolta*).

5. Warn the faithful against fictitious and doubtful indulgences. Sometimes hand-bills are circulated which contain forged indulgences of wonderful value. Denounce vigorously, and counteract them by recommending solid merchandise. *Iis Indulgentiis potissimum insistant, easque populo maxime commendent, quas fideles frequentius, facilius, et majori cum fructu lucrari possint. Hujusmodi sunt, quae scapularia gestantibus, Coronam B. Virginis Precatoriam, Litaniasque Lauretanas recitantibus, aliquod temporis in oratione mentali impendentibus, Mensis Mariani exercitia peragentibus, Stationibus Viae Crucis adsistentibus, SS. Sacramentum in Ecclesiis reservatum visitantibus conceduntur; et aliae plures, quae omnibus ad manus sunt, quaeque pietatem maxime fovent, promoventque fidei, spei, et charitatis augmentum* (Conc. Balt. II. 302).

6. Dwell with predilection on the indulgences attached

Digitized by Google

to Scapulars, Rosaries, and Stations of the Cross. The Rosary is now the favorite devotion of Catholics. Say it slowly when reciting it in church; do not allow people to begin with the *Holy Mary* before you have pronounced the adorable name of Jesus. Give out the mysteries, and close with the acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Contrition. Have the stations erected canonically; observe the prescriptions of the Church. Keep the instrument of erection framed and hung up in church or vestry. Instruct the people how to make the stations privately. Let it be the proper devotion of Lent, and when making the devotion publicly, carry it out with becoming solemnity. No special form of prayer is required for the gaining of the many indulgences attached to the Way of the Cross. All that is necessary is to make the round of the fourteen stations and to meditate a few moments before each station on the mystery it represents. The most beautiful method of performing this devotion is that of St. Alphonsus, found in many prayer-books.

CHAPTER V.

THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

§ 37.

Sick Calls.

1. Our divine Lord seemed to pay more attention to the poor sick than to any other class of people. The three years of His public life were spent in helping the sick; His principal miracles were wrought in their favor. He gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf; He made the lame and paralytic walk, and He cleansed the leper. St. Matthew summarizes the public life of Christ: *Circuibat curans*

Digitized by Google

omnem languorem et omnem infirmitatem (ix. 35). He left as His legacy the care of His dear sick to His apostles: *In quamcumque civitatem intraveritis curate infirmos qui in illa sunt* (Luke x. 9). The successors of the apostles in the priesthood have considered the care of the sick their special work. "The two chief works of a pastor are the preparing of children for the warfare in life, and the preparing of the sick for the last conflict in death. The school and the sick-room are the two chief fields of the priest's charity and fervor" (Cardinal Manning, *The Eternal Priesthood*).

2. At the sick-bed and at the death-bed, where he especially shows the unselfish and affectionate tenderness of a father, the Catholic priest wins the grateful love of the faithful and the respectful admiration of non-Catholics. There he appears as the *pastor bonus qui animam suam dat pro ovibus suis* (John x. 11). "There is no function of our ministry, no service that we can render, more calculated to make men love the Church and love the religion she teaches. The heroism of St. Charles Borromeo during the plague at Milan has been celebrated in story and in romance, and the world to this day looks back upon it with admiration. When the people see you making your way to the hovel where sickness calls you, through dashing rain and blinding sleet; when they see you leave your dinner or leave your bed, and go over mountain and morass in the darkness of the night; when they see that no pestilence or contagion affrights you, and that you stand calm and fearless by the side of those who are sweltering in fever and writhing in cholera; when they see you lifting in your arms a mass of living disease or drinking in the contagion of the breath, that the poor sick person may have the consolation of confessing more freely and more secretly; when they see you bending over the prostrate form of their parent or their child, showing forth in word and look and

Digitized by Google

in your whole demeanor the blandness and the tenderness and the compassion of Jesus Christ; when they see you coming back, again and again, to their cabin-door to give more comfort and to make salvation more secure—then they will rejoice that they are members of the Church of which you are ministers; then they will look forward with hope to the consolations which shall surround their own death-bed when their turn comes; they will stand by you firm in their allegiance in the hour of trial; they will believe in you, because it is plain that you believe what you teach" (Bishop Moriarty, *Allocutions*).

3. As soon as you hear of a person under your charge being seriously ill, but not in any proximate danger of death, say to yourself, *Ecce quem amas infirmatur*, and without standing on ceremonies or awaiting a call from a relative or friend, go directly to the house of the sick.*

* "There are some anointed ministers here and there," Cardinal Gibbons truly remarks, "happily few in number, who do not adequately realize their grave responsibility in the service of the sick, and who do not exercise towards them the diligence and fatherly solicitude which their sacred calling demands. On the specious pretext that sick calls at night are often inspired by groundless fear, these clergymen are reluctant to respond to such a summons, unless it is accompanied by a medical certificate that the case is urgent. When the messenger arrives, he is gravely informed that the pastor is asleep and does not wish to be disturbed. '*Dormit Petrus.*' Peter sleeps, while his Master, in the person of the afflicted patient, is in the toils of death and struggling with the tempter. If after much importunity the priest is aroused, he appears before the messenger in an irritable frame of mind, and expresses his opinion that the case is not of a pressing nature, and that it could be safely deferred till the next morning. It is true indeed that the ailment of the patient is frequently exaggerated; but may not the pastor's indolent disposition be in some measure responsible for the exaggeration? The family are tempted to magnify the illness of the invalid from the apprehension they feel that, if it is not reported as very serious and critical, he may be deprived of the ministrations of the priest. In this unamiable mood he approaches the sick chamber, chilling both patient and attendants by his cold and formal bearing. He performs the sacred rites in a forced and perfunctory manner. His exhortation is without unction, his visit without comfort, his manner without composure, and

Digitized by Google

Cum primum noverit, quempiam ex fidelibus curae suae commissis aegrotare, non expectabit ut ad eum vocetur, sed ultro ad illum accedat (*Rit. Rom.*). It is sometimes dangerous to leave it entirely to the relatives of the sick to send for the priest; they are often blinded by human affection, or are cowards through human respect, and therefore do not wish to reveal the dangerous condition of the sick. A sick call should never resemble a purely social visit; it should always have the character of a sacred function, and never be without profit to priest, patient, and all in the house. *Aegrotos visitans, ea, qua sacerdotes Domini decet, honestate et gravitate se habeat, ut non aegris solum, sed sibi et domesticis verbo et exemplo prosit ad salutem* (*Rit. Rom.*). Approach the sick with every consideration and kindness. Sympathize with him from the start. Avoid noise and familiarity. The sick man is sensitive; the touch of a cold hand may irritate him and spoil the effect of the priestly visitation. Do not laugh at or ridicule a nervous patient; his eccentricities and groundless fears are the effects of his sickness.

4. Make your visits short, but frequent. Confine your principal attention to the patient and not to the other members of the household. It would be against the spirit of your calling if you said a few words to the sick and then sat down for a long chat with others about the house. In chronic diseases, such as consumption, dropsy, and cancer, a weekly visit would be perhaps strictly sufficient; but those who are poor and friendless should see the priest more frequently.* In acute diseases, such as pneumonia

he abruptly leaves, probably never to return, though the patient may survive for weeks or even months" (*The Ambassador of Christ*, p. 371).

* The evening hour is probably the most suitable for ordinary visits to the sick-room. With the declining day the courage of the patient usually appears to be on its wane. A few words of holy consolation, with prayer and blessing of the priest, will raise the sinking spirits and make

Digitized by Google

and typhoid fever, a visit every day, or, at least, every other day, would be in order. Those who are in agony or near to it should be visited, if possible, several times on the same day; for the needs of the dying are great, as his temptations are strong, and the devil is making his last effort to ruin the soul. On a small mission a priest should assist the dying until the soul is safely landed on the shores of eternity. If the agony lasts long, absolution should be repeated every half-hour. Bishop Moriarty gives the following practical rule for his clergy: "The priest who leaves a person in danger of death for more than a week without a repetition of his visit and the visit of our divine Lord in the Holy Viaticum is exposing himself and his patient to a terrible risk. The priest who can easily visit oftener, or who knows that the sick person is exposed to dangerous temptations, is bound in charity; and if he have the *cura animarum* as parish priest or curate he is bound in justice to repeat his visit as frequently as the spiritual need of the sick person may require."

5. The priest does not call to offer words of merely human consolation and advice; he comes as the minister of Christ to bring peace into the midst of excitement and anxiety. *Pax huic domui, et omnibus habitantibus in ea.* Stale phrases about the troubles of life and the ills and woes of humanity will not dispose the patient to unite his sufferings with those of his crucified Redeemer, who alone can sweeten sorrows and pains with His example and grace.

the night less gloomy. The *parish priest* in Longfellow's *Golden Legend* expresses his duty when he says at evening time:

> "The evening air grows dusk and brown;
> I must go forth into the town,
> To visit beds of pain and death,
> Of restless limbs and quivering breath,
> Of sorrowing hearts, and patient eyes
> That see, through tears, the sun go down,
> But never more shall see it rise."

Digitized by Google

Let the words you speak in God's name to the sick be holy —not uttered at random, but well chosen and deeply felt. *Accedat autem ad aegrotum ita paratus, ut in promptu habeat argumenta ad persuadendum apta ac praesertim sanctorum exempla, quae plurimum valent, quibus eum in Domino consoletur, excitet ac recreet* (*Rit. Rom.*). Like a shower in summer on the parched land, so must be the effect of the priestly word on the heart of the sufferer. If your heart be constantly united with that of the Master, if your mind be daily fed by His word in meditation and strengthened by the reading of the lives of His saints, you will have *in promptu* what to say at that momentous hour. *Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum* (Ps. xliv. 2). "Sickness weighs heavily upon heart and mind. The sick are often sad and oppressed by the consciousness of sins, both of evil done and good undone, and through weakness they are unable to throw the burden off. They often say that they cannot pray, and that they cannot think: they can only lie and suffer. It is at such a time that a priest can think for them and call their thoughts into activity. If he be a 'fountain of water whose waters shall not fail,' then he will refresh the soul that is dry through suffering and parched by mental anxiety. What is true of the sick is still more true of the dying. In the last hours the voice of a good priest is as the voice of a messenger from God; that is, of God Himself. The whispered name of Jesus, and the acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Contrition breathed into the ear that will soon hear no more, are the end of his pastoral care. The sanctified sufferings of the sick and the saint-like transit of the dying; the thanks of the sick and passing soul even in broken words or by the last transient gleam of a peaceful and grateful look, are a reward beyond all earthly recompense" (Cardinal Manning, *The Eternal Priesthood*).

6. The priest is not obliged to tell the patient whose

Digitized by Google

sickness is fatal that there is no chance of his recovery, that he must settle his accounts with God, before whose tribunal he is soon to appear. Indeed, such a warning would be dangerous for soul and body in many cases. It is easy to tell the poor and humble who have led a good life to prepare for a better world. Death does not alarm them; it is often a great relief, and they anxiously ask: "Father, will I be going soon?" But with rich and worldly people a priest must be prudent when he has to tell them that it would be better for them to receive the last sacraments. He must do it in the kindest and least alarming manner, apparently suggesting rather than ordering. He should not take every hope of life from anybody. His task is to prepare the sick person to die well, to be resigned to God's holy will, and to make his sufferings meritorious for heaven.

7. Whenever you are called to a sick man, strive to hear his confession. It relieves him wonderfully, helps his recovery, and eases your own mind considerably as well as his. Though there be actually no danger and no seriousness in the disease, death sometimes comes suddenly after a slight indisposition. What a consolation for the priest to know that the soul has been freed from mortal sin before going to God! Do not go alone on a sick call at night-time. Be accompanied by somebody whom you can trust and who knows the road.

8. Be prudent in your relations with the physician. Entertain a sincere respect for him, and try to gain and keep his esteem. Never interfere with his work unless absolutely necessary—as, for instance, when it is your duty to protest against an immoderate use of anæsthetics, against craniotomy and abortion. Do not express your opinion about the issue of the disease. Show no preference for a particular doctor, and pass no criticism on the treatment of the case. On the contrary, induce people to send for a physician in time, and urge them carefully to observe his

Digitized by Google

orders and prescriptions. Remind them of the teaching of Holy Writ: *Honora medicum propter necessitatem; etenim illum creavit Altissimus. Altissimus creavit de terra medicamenta, et vir prudens non abhorrebit illa* (Ecclus. xxxviii. 1, 4). The physician who is called may not be a shining light in his profession, but he generally knows more about sickness than the average priest.

9. Though a priest is not allowed to play the physician nor to prescribe drugs, yet the force of circumstances oblige him occasionally to prescribe sanitary regulations in order to secure pure air, proper food and clothing for the patient.* He should also learn from an experienced physician

* The following extract from a little book, entitled *Extreme Unction*, and published by Rev. M. Philipps, of Buffalo, gives instructions of practical importance:

NURSING DURING THE LAST MOMENTS.

Do not give way to screaming, noise, and weeping; words of consolation, short prayers, alleviate the dying. The sense of hearing is often working still when all other senses are paralyzed. Do not forget to moisten the tongue by giving spoonfuls of water or water with a little wine, because the tongue is often very dry on account of the difficult breathing from the open mouth.

Sprinkle the dying with holy water, and if possible, give him a crucifix in his hands or a blessed candle.

Admit as much fresh air as possible into the room.

Remove all unnecessary persons, that is, strangers.

Nobody should be allowed to throw himself over the sick.

The dressing and washing of the corpse should not be done before it has become cold. The mouth should not be tightly bound up immediately after death, because there may be a possibility of life present.

If possible, the corpse should not be left during the first twenty-four hours without being watched; it should be looked at from time to time until signs of death are established.

SIGNS OF APPROACHING DEATH.

Which are the signs by which we may know that death is approaching?

The whole face becomes drooping, as it were; the lower jaw sinks; the eyelids droop, without closing; the nose and the temples shrink, the eyes become fixed; the cornea becomes dim, glassy without lustre, and

Digitized by Google

how to act in cases of emergency. One of the following works gives useful information: Capellmann, *Medicina Pastoralis;* Barzaletti, *Il parrocco instruito nella medicina;* Debreyne, *Étude de la mort.*

10. Regarding the temporalities of the sick, the Roman Ritual has the following rubric: *Si morbus gravior vel cum periculo fuerit, aegroto suadeat, ut dum integra mente est, rem suam omnem recte constituat, et testamentum faciat; si quid habeat alienum, restituat, et ad remedium animae suae pro facultatibus, quod in Domino ei placuerit, disponat, sed haec suggerendo omnis avaritiae*

hollow; the mouth is half open; the lips dry, thin, and apart; the whole face assumes a dusky gray yellow, sometimes a bluish hue; the ears, nose, and successively the whole face, become cold and generally covered with a cold, clammy sweat. There is a tendency of the body to sink towards the bottom of the bed; the head is drawn backward or aside; limbs raised fall back powerless. The breathing is hard and slow, next irregular and unequal, sighing and croaking. Often the larynx is paralyzed and drinks fall through, as it were, and reach the stomach with a rumbling noise. The pulse grows weak, ceases at intervals, and in the end stops entirely.

Coldness of the limbs goes upwards and unconsciousness begins; the senses of smell, taste, and touch are first gone, then that of sight. Hearing generally remains to the last.

In most cases the event of death is not at all hard. It happens often that patients feel in painful diseases an almost comfortable condition shortly before death, on account of the paralysis that takes place.

When is a person dead?

After the last breath the person is considered dead, although sometimes minutes pass before the spark of life becomes completely extinct.

SIGNS OF REAL DEATH.

Which are the signs that show that death has taken place?

STIFFNESS.—The muscles are firmly contracted; they are hard to touch, and shortened. The lower jaw is again drawn up, and the mouth firmly closed. If the bent limbs are stretched by force, the muscles do not contract again. This stiffness appears 1 to 24 hours after death, and continues from 6 to 48 hours.

DECAYING.—This appears as soon as stiffness goes away, and is noticed by a peculiar smell, spots on the spaces between the ribs, and by blisters and elevations of the skin filled with a dirty greenish color.

Digitized by Google

nota caveatur. The priest ought to advise the sick man to settle his temporal affairs, to make a will (if necessary), thus preventing difficulties and disputes after his death. This advice should be given, as a matter of conscience, in confession. The confessor should not go into details or meddle in the least with the last will and testament of the patient; nor should he allow his priestly name to figure in the will of a layman as witness or executor. Every appearance of greed and avarice must be avoided, and the Catholic priest must keep out of legal difficulties and at a respectful distance from the courts.

§ 38.

The Anointing of the Sick.

1. With holy oil the principal members of the sick are anointed, to purify them from those sins of which they have been the organs. *Per istam sanctam unctionem et suam piissimam misericordiam indulgeat tibi Dominus, quidquid per . . . deliquisti. Amen.** What a sublime and powerful prayer at that supreme hour when the Christian warrior prepares himself for the last struggle on earth! How important the duty of the priest to see that none of his children leaves this world without the Sacrament of Extreme Unction! He should strive to root out all prejudice and carelessness that exist in his congregation, and which frequently prevent the reception of this sacrament in time. It should be administered when the patient is in full possession of his mental faculties, and realizes the importance of the holy act, and not when deprived of his senses and in the throes of death. *Neque dubium est, contra morem mentemque Sanctae matris Ecclesiae agere sacerdotem, qui expectat, donec aegrotus in agone mortis jaceat, ut eum Sacro Oleo inungat. Constat enim uberiores gratiae fructus in*

*In case of necessity this short form suffices (Canon 947): *Per istam sanctam Unctionem indulgeat tibi Dominus quidquid deliquisti. Amen.*

Digitized by Google

animas eorum derivari, qui hujus Sacramenti participes fiunt, dum in iis adhuc integra mens viget ac ratio. Qua de re haud inopportunum erit serio, blande tamen ac leniter, ipsum aegrotantem adloqui, propinquos quoque ejus ac amicos commonere; et, si in arcessendo sacerdote negligentiores fuerint, pro officii sui munere increpare (Conc. Balt. II. 306).

2. Extreme Unction not only cures the soul, but often brings health for the sick body. Every priest with experience in pastoral life can tell of instances where sick people grew visibly better from the moment they were anointed. *Super aegros manus imponent et bene habebunt* (Mark xvi. 18). And if it does not happen more frequently that the anointed recover their health, it is, as the Roman Catechism remarks, because their faith in the efficacy of the sacrament is feeble. Teach the people not to be alarmed when you speak of Extreme Unction; you intend to cure, not to kill them, as the prayers of the Ritual clearly indicate. *Quum vero, teste S. Jacobo, inter praeclaros hujus Unctionis effectus, sit aliquando vel sanitatis corporalis restitutio, patet quam absurde sentiant non pauci nostrates, qui sacerdotis infirmos uncturi adventum, quasi mortis impendentis indicium atque augurium quoddam habent. Studeant igitur animarum moderatores improbam hanc et insulsissimam opinionem inter docendum concionandumque gravissimis verbis reprehendere ac refellere, ut ex omnium animis penitus extirpetur* (Conc. Balt. II. 307).

3. An annual instruction on the last sacraments of the Church and on the things to be prepared for the visit of the priest will be gratefully received by the people, who are generally anxious that everything be in order. The room should be cleaned and aired. "There is no cabin so poor that it may not be made clean" (O'Kane). No dogs or cats should be allowed inside. The bed should be covered

Digitized by Google

with clean linens. The parts to be anointed, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands, and feet, should be washed before the priest comes. On a table, covered with a white cloth, should be placed a crucifix, two candles, holy water with a shrub or evergreen or some other plant, a communion card or napkin, a glass of water, a spoon, a plate with salt, or better, crumbs of bread, and six or seven little balls of cotton, a towel. These preparations will increase the respect and reverence of the faithful for the sacraments and their consecrated minister. Praise the good people before leaving the house where you find everything well prepared; it will encourage others to do likewise.

4. Extreme Unction cannot be repeated while the same danger of death continues. A recovery of some kind is required before the sick person can be again anointed. Generally speaking, in all *acute* diseases Extreme Unction is administered but once. But in *chronic* diseases, which are all of long duration, a person frequently recovers from the manifest danger of death, although the disease still continues and will probably end fatally. Whenever a chronic disease, such as dropsy or consumption, enters into a new phase or state, Extreme Unction may and ought to be repeated. In case of a positive doubt about this change or turn of the same disease, the priest should incline to the repetition of the sacrament.

5. After the administration of Extreme Unction the priest generally imparts the *Apostolic Benediction* to the sick—a plenary indulgence *in articulo mortis*, i.e., to be gained only when death actually occurs. Before giving this blessing the priest should see to it that the conditions absolutely required are fulfilled; he should excite the sick person to sorrow for his sins and inspire him with sentiments of fervent love of God and perfect resignation to His holy will, so as to accept death from His divine hand as a punishment deserved for his sins, and should make

Digitized by Google

him invoke the names of Jesus and Mary. This indulgence can be gained only once, but it can be repeatedly imparted, in every danger of death.

§ 39.

Christian Burial.

1. Our duties towards the faithful do not cease when the soul has left its earthly mansion. In the rubrics the Church expresses her desires concerning the dead; she directs us to care for the bodies and souls of our departed brothers. She bids us to honor and treat their mortal remains that have been the temple of the Holy Spirit as the relics of saints. She lovingly entreats us to shorten their sufferings in purgatory by the means at our disposal, and thus to hasten their eternal happiness. The time between the demise and the burial is spent in holy prayer; saints and angels are invited to assist in supplicating the divine mercy for the speedy admission of the dead into the realms of everlasting bliss. *Subvenite Sancti Dei, occurrite Angeli Domini, suscipientes animam ejus, offerentes eam in conspectu Altissimi. Suscipiat te Christus qui vocavit te, et in sinu Abrahae Angeli deducant te.*

2. Regarding the corpse of a Christian as a sacred thing, the Church goes into minute details as to how it should be laid out and reverently guarded with vigils and sacred rites before the earth receives it. *Corpus de more honeste compositum loco decenti cum lumine collocetur, ac parva crux super pectus inter manus defuncti ponatur; aut ubi crux desit, manus in modum crucis componantur; interdumque aspergatur aqua benedicta; et interim donec efferatur, qui adsunt, sive sacerdotes sive alii orabunt pro defuncto* (*Rit. Rom.*). At wakes all useless talk and boisterous conduct must be avoided. The Rosary should be

Digitized by Google

frequently recited by the friends of the deceased instead of vain and silly lamentations. Nor is it becoming for Catholics to indulge in fulsome praise. *Laudantur, ubi non sunt; cruciantur, ubi sunt.*

3. On the day of burial the body is carried to the church. The holy sacrifice of the Mass is offered for the repose of the soul, and the body is sprinkled with holy water and incensed. There is nothing more pathetic and consoling for mourners than these solemn funeral rites over the remains of their loved ones. The dead Christian visits for the last time the church where he was born to God in Baptism; where, sin-stained, he was cleansed; where he so often nourished his soul with the Bread of angels, and knelt in humble devotion to adore the immaculate Victim upon the altar. The Church now parts with him in peace and hope: *Requiem aeternam dona ei, Domine; et lux perpetua luceat ei.* No adult should be deprived of Mass at his burial on account of poverty. If no stipend can be offered, the good priest will feel himself richly rewarded with his charitable act. A Purgatorian Society may make the usual offering, if necessary. But in all cases the Roman Ritual should be observed: *Quod antiquissimi est instituti, illud, quantum fieri poterit, retineatur, ut Missa praesente corpore defuncti pro eo celebretur, antequam sepulturae tradatur.* The bodies of children should likewise be brought to the church for the obsequies. It is heartless to bury children without priest and prayer.

4. From the church the funeral train moves slowly and solemnly to the cemetery, where the ashes of Christians are sacredly guarded until the day of resurrection. *Ecclesia Catholica, ceu pia mater, fidelium suorum filiorum corpora adhuc post mortem officiis tenere prosequitur, eaque ritibus sacris in loco sacro recondit, donec tuba Archangeli mirum spargente sonum resurgant, et animis conjuncta ante Judicis thronum cogantur. Pro iis vero*

Digitized by Google

debito honore reponendis, coemeteria parat ac sacris caeremoniis et precibus consecrat, atque ab omni profano usu segregat (Conc. Balt. II. 388). The procession to the cemetery should be thoroughly Catholic and useful for the dead. Prayer or chant should engage the attention of all participants until the last resting-place is reached. How can a Christian engage in frivolous conversation as he is winding his way to the burial-ground, his own future home?

> "Into its furrows shall we all be cast,
> In the sure faith that we shall rise again
> At the great harvest, when the Archangel's blast
> Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain."
>
> LONGFELLOW.

In places where the cemetery is at a considerable distance from the church people generally follow in carriages. Condemn all wasteful and useless expenses. Encourage people to come to the funeral Mass and pray for the dead, but to avoid all worldly show. Flowers look hideous on the corpse of a grown person, whilst they are appropriate for innocent children, at whose funeral the Church rejoices and puts on the vesture of gladness.

5. Keep the cemetery a truly Christian burial-place. It is not enough to buy a large tract of land, to lay it out in lots, to bless it and leave it a heap of rubbish and tangled weeds—*sicut ager figuli.* Make it a *God's acre*, a dormitory for His weary children. Place in the middle a large crucifix, possibly of stone, or a little chapel with a *pietà.* Plant trees and shrubs: weeping-willow, black ash, Norway spruce, maple, and elm are favorite cemetery trees. The Third Baltimore Council has a special decree on the care of Catholic cemeteries: *Omnes ecclesiarum rectores graviter monemus, ipsis veram incumbere obligationem de coemeteriis Catholicis rite et decenter custodiendis, ne ex eorum conditione sordida aut neglecta fideles justam con-*

Digitized by Google

querendi causam habeant, et suorum corpora in eis tumulare aversentur (No. 315).

6. According to an old Catholic custom, the cemetery clusters around the church, and is styled *churchyard.* Wherever it is practical, the cemetery should adjoin the church; and it can be done on most of our country missions in America. "How beautiful the usage is!" exclaims Bishop Moriarty. "It gives a religious unity to the life of man. From the baptismal font to the grave—from the day he was asked at the porch *quid petis ab ecclesia Dei* to the farewell *Requiescat* over his coffin—he was under the guardianship of the Church, and in the house of God he received those sacraments which marked the progress of his spiritual existence. He is not dead; he lives for Him *cui omnia vivunt.* He only sleeps, waiting for resurrection; and most fitly does he sleep under the shadow of God's house: the Church, like a fond mother, watching and guarding the pillow of her sleeping child. How beautiful and impressive, when on Sunday the parish meets to pray, to be surrounded by the graves of their fathers, and thus united with all the generations that are past—the living and the dead forming one congregation. When the holy sacrifice is offered, those who sleep in the dust have their faces turned towards the altar, and the priests who instructed them in their day have their faces turned towards the people."

7. *Sancta ergo et salubris est cogitatio pro defunctis exorare* (2 Mach. xii. 46). See that the dead are not forgotten when out of sight. Publish the names of the deceased during the week, on the Sunday following, and request the people to pray for them, especially during Mass. Frequently remind them in your sermons and instructions of their duties towards the dead, and tell them to relieve the poor souls by Masses, indulgences, almsgiving, and prayer. Ask them to visit the graves of their friends on

Digitized by Google

Sunday afternoons; it is a powerful reminder of death; it sobers the mind and chastens the heart, and directs their souls to the land of the hereafter.

8. Frassinetti counsels a parish priest never on his own authority to deny Christian burial to any of those who may be unworthy of it, but to lay the case before the bishop, and await his instructions; he should not use the postal service for this important business, but go in person to the bishop, even at great inconvenience and expense, or at least send a trusty and intelligent messenger, with a letter stating the full particulars about the case. If the bishop cannot be reached in time and the priest must decide himself, he should not refuse Christian burial unless the three canonical conditions for refusal exist: *certitudo facti, notorietas facti et pertinacia.* If there is the least doubt about the existence of any of these conditions, Christian burial should not be denied. Ecclesiastical burial is one of the principal rights of a Christian, and he cannot justly be deprived of it unless it is a clear case against him. The Second Baltimore Council mentions those who are deprived of Christian burial by the common ecclesiastical law: *Haeritici et schismatici; excommunicati notorii et vitandi; qui mentis compotes sibi mortem consciverint, nisi aliquo forsan tempore superstites resipiscentiae signa dederint; qui morti proximi obstinate et coram testibus Sacramenta sibi oblata respuerint; qui notorie scandalosam degerint vitam, nec poenitentiae ullum dederint signum; demum, qui duello perierint, dederint vel non dederint resipiscentiae indicia* (No. 389). The case which presents itself more frequently than the others mentioned by the Council is that of suicide. The bishop who ought to be consulted *quam primum* should lean to the side of mercy, as suicide is often the effect of insanity, especially with people who have led a practically Christian life.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS.

§ 40.

Candidates.

1. Though it is primarily an episcopal duty to provide the Lord's vineyard with worthy laborers, yet the task of singling out the youthful aspirants and of fostering their first inclinations and tendencies for the holy ministry necessarily falls upon the priest, who comes into more intimate contact with the promising lads of the diocese. In the parochial school, which is best calculated to preserve the child's soul in baptismal innocence, the priest may first detect the budding of a sacerdotal vocation and direct the sacred aspirations of the future candidate into safe channels. *Magni profecto interest, ut Ecclesiae futuri ministri a teneris unguiculis singulari studio ad pietatem et doctrinam informentur. Quapropter parochos ceterosque sacerdotes hortamur in Domino et enixe rogamus, ut diligenter animum intendant ad inquirendos dignoscendosque inter pueros suae curae commissos, qui ad clericale tyrocinium idonei et vocati videantur* (Conc. Balt. III. 136).

2. On country missions, where a poor boy has no opportunity to begin his classical studies, the priest should teach him the rudiments of the Latin language. Since the days of the apostles the ranks of the priesthood have been chiefly recruited from the poor and laboring classes. This is especially the case in the United States, where the majority of our zealous and hard-working priests have come from the homes of the poor and lowly. Want of means should never be a serious obstacle for the bright boy into whose ear the Lord whispers the *Ego elegi te.* The ingenious affection of

Digitized by Google

his pastor will find it comparatively easy to remove the obstacle. *Si quos repererint pueros "bonae indolis, piae mentis, devoti generosique animi aptos studiis," qui spem afferant eos ecclesiasticis ministeriis perpetuo inservituros, nutriant illorum zelum; pretiosa illa vocationis germina sedulo foveant; pro paterna caritate ad pietatem et elementa scientiarum eos informent, ad studia incitent, a saeculi contagiis sollicite arceant; parentes ipsos moneant ut filios dummodo signa verae vocationis ostendant, ad ingrediendum statum clericalem sancte inducant; obstacula demum removere satagant quae non raro ex familiae egestate oriuntur* (Conc. Balt. III. 136).

3. When the young aspirant returns from college or seminary to spend his vacation in your parish the charge of his masters temporarily devolves on you. You must keep a vigilant eye on him, and be ever ready to assist him with your fatherly counsels and warnings. Many temptations beset the young candidate during vacation. He is loved and admired by all; he is the pride of the congregation, and the promising boast of friends and relatives. There is a period in his student's life when he is liable to be haughty, carrying his head high, not exactly inflated with philosophy, but with harmless dreams and foolish flattery,—when he is prone to stubbornness and to criticising the world for its ignorance and awkwardness. He is then *in fieri*. The Germans have invented an expressive name for such a being: they give him the classic appellation of *mule* (Maul-esel). The priest must patiently bear with his apparent insolence until the transition is finished and the young man finds his level. Should a young aspirant, however, show signs of a certain weakness towards female charms or be fond of drinking (intoxicating liquor), he should receive a serious warning not to trifle with his vocation, and if he does not seriously and speedily amend he should be prevented from taking Holy Orders. A greater service is

Digitized by Google

rendered to the Church in America by keeping one student from becoming a bad priest than by assisting ten young men to become good priests.

4. As idleness is the mother of many evils, it would be dangerous for the vocation of the candidate to give himself up to absolute inertness during vacation. See that he attends your daily Mass, and visits the Blessed Sacrament during the day. Give him some interesting books, and superintend his readings by talking to him on the contents. Let him assist you in teaching catechism to boys. Train him to lofty ideas and plans. If there are plenty of priests in your diocese, encourage him to a universal zeal which looks to save souls anywhere. Frequently invite him to your table, where you can observe his manners and perhaps correct them. Make an occasional excursion with him, and, in short, strive to make every vacation most pleasant and memorable to him. Above all, teach him by word and example to have an exalted idea and a holy awe for the dignity of the priest: *Inter Deum et hominem constitutus, minor Deo, major homine* (Innoc. III.).

5. Frassinetti points out three maxims which we ought principally to inculcate on young clerical aspirants: "(*a*) That it is very honorable in an ecclesiastic to cherish poverty, even though he may have a large income. For even large incomes are always insufficient, if one wishes to meet the want which daily presents itself, of promoting those various good works which cannot be promoted without money. (*b*) That an ecclesiastic ought to be so cautious, circumspect, and chaste in all his movements, looks, and thoughts, that one might apply to him the words which the Church sings of St. Aloysius: *Vel carnis expers spiritus, vel angelus cum corpore.* (*c*) That an ecclesiastic ought always to look to Rome, whence proceeds the true light of Christian wisdom; and that he may not depart a hair's breadth from what is there believed, and is taught from

Digitized by Google

the Chair which God has there established (*Manual*, part ii. chap. vii. § 2).

6. Since the happiness and welfare of our Catholic people depends on the priesthood, they should often be exhorted to pray for the candidates for Holy Orders. Whenever you publish the ember days of the coming week, remind the faithful that these days are set apart by the Church as the time for conferring sacred Orders on the clerical aspirants, and ask them to beseech the Lord that all the *Ordinandi* may be "according to His own heart." Of all the collections taken in the church during the entire year none is so important as that for seminarians. Throw your whole energy into the announcement of this collection, and rouse the enthusiasm and generosity of the faithful for this noble purpose—the education of the priests. In their Pastoral Letter the Fathers of the Third Baltimore Council praise the zealous liberality of our Catholic people, and trust that they will not cease their charitable efforts for the support of our seminaries. "In the future, as in the past, look upon your annual contribution to the seminary fund as one of your most important duties as Catholics, and let your generosity be proportioned to the dignity and sacredness of the object for which you offer it."

CHAPTER VII.

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY.*

§ 41.

1. The first five of the seven sacraments affect the sanctification of the individual man, whilst Holy Orders

* This chapter on Matrimony is one of the most difficult chapters of pastoral theology, and yet we may pass over it with a few general remarks and practical hints. Our learned friend and colleague, the Very

Digitized by Google

and Matrimony aim at sanctifying mankind. Through these two sacraments humanity is raised to the supernatural order of grace. In Matrimony the propagation of the human race loses its beastly nature by receiving a sacramental character; in Holy Orders, human society obtains its legitimate authority, whereby it is led to its supernatural destiny. Holy Orders secures mankind against dissolution, and Matrimony against deficiency, as St. Thomas teaches: *Ordinatur ordo contra dissolutionem multitudinis; matrimonium . . . contra defectum multitudinis, qui per mortem accidit* (St. Thom. iii. qu. 65, a. 1).

2. God Himself laid the solid basis of human society by instituting and blessing marriage; His divine Son elevated it to the rank and dignity of a sacrament. "The basis of the Christian home is Christian marriage; that is, marriage entered into according to religion, and cemented by God's blessing. So great is the importance of marriage to the temporal and eternal welfare of mankind, that as it has God for its Founder in the Old Law, so in the New Law it was raised by our divine Lord to the dignity of a sacrament of the Christian religion. Natural likings and instincts have their own value and weight; but they ought not by themselves to be a decisive motive in so important a step as Christian marriage, nor are they a safe guarantee for the proper fulfilment of the high ends for which marriage was ordained. That Christian hearts and lives may be wisely and rightly joined, God must join them and religion sanctify the union; and

Rev. Canon De Becker, in his recent work *De Sponsalibus et Matrimonio* (Bruxellis, Société Belge de Librairie), has treated the matter so clearly and exhaustively, and has made his book so applicable in its practical bearings to the condition of things in the United States, that we content ourself with referring our young ecclesiastics to the *Praelectiones* of the illustrious Dr. De Becker, assuring them that a close study of the admirable treatise will enable them to solve any marriage case which may present itself for their solution during their future ministry.

Digitized by Google

though the Church sometimes permits the contraction of mixed marriages, she never does so without regret and without a feeling of anxiety for the future happiness of that union and for the eternal salvation of its offspring" (Pastoral Letter of the Fathers of the Third Baltimore Council).

3. At the gate which leads to the sanctuary of Matrimony the priest stands as the appointed guardian of its noble dignity, ready, like St. John the Baptist, to defend the marriage tie with his own life's blood. He wields the flaming sword of God's inviolable doctrine, with which he cuts the network of lustful lies and sensual promises woven by Protestantism and infidelity. He repeatedly teaches the nature and holiness of the marriage state, which is under the control of the Church of Christ, and not under the dictation of a temporal power. And from this constant teaching of the sanctity of matrimony depends the welfare of society. *Rectores animarum saepe moneant fideles ne profanorum hominum errore abripiantur qui pro negotio terreno tantum et saeculari matrimonium habent; iisque in memoriam revocent juxta doctrinam Ecclesiae rem esse sanctissimam utpote sacramentum, et signum quo Christus suum erga sponsam Ecclesiam amorem quodammodo adumbrare dignatus est* (Conc. Balt. III. 125).

4. Marriage is not a merely human contract which can be dissolved by the mutual consent of the contracting parties or by the power of the Church or State. Christian marriage is indissoluble. The Catholic Church clings to this principle with undying tenacity. Were it not for the Church, what would have become of the world since the so-called reformers divested matrimony of its holiness? The degrading theory of *free love* is the result of denying the sacramental character of marriage. The Fathers of the Third Baltimore Council repeat in concise and impressive language the Catholic doctrine: "Christian marriage, once

Digitized by Google

consummated, can never be dissolved save by death. Let it be well understood that even adultery, though it may justify 'separation from bed and board,' cannot loose the marriage tie, so that either of the parties may marry again during the life of the other. Nor has 'legal divorce' the slightest power before God to loose the bond of marriage and to make a subsequent marriage valid. 'What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder' (Matt. xix. 6). In common with all Christian believers and friends of civilization, we deplore the havoc wrought by the divorce laws of our country. These laws are fast loosening the foundations of society. Let Catholics at least remember that such divorces are powerless in conscience. Let them enter into marriage only through worthy and holy motives and with the blessings of religion, especially with the blessing of the Nuptial Mass. And then, far from wishing for means of escape from their union, they will regret that it can be dissolved even by death" (Pastoral Letter).

5. With a long experience of nineteen centuries, the Catholic Church cannot approve of *mixed marriages;* she even abhors and detests them as repugnant and unnatural; and if sometimes she reluctantly tolerates them under certain conditions to avoid a greater evil, she always withholds from them her blessing and prayers. She exhorts her priests never to cease to agitate against such unions of Catholics with non-Catholics. Do not wait until the arrangements are made for the wedding; it would be almost too late to stop it; get ahead of the evil. Frequently explain in your instructions the evil consequences of mixed marriages, how dangerous they are to the Catholic parties of losing their faith or becoming indifferent towards it, how unhappy they generally turn out, as the foundation of happiness, the union of hearts, is wanting. *Ecclesia semper aversata est nuptias inter Catholicos et acatholicos,*

Digitized by Google

tum ob flagitiosam in divinis communionem, tum ob gravissimum periculum vel perversionis Catholicae partis, vel pravae institutionis prolis nasciturae (Conc. Balt. III. 130). Brownson, speaking of a Catholic girl who marries a heretic, says that she never would and never could open her heart to love for one whom she must regard as a child of Satan, the enemy of her religion and her God. "How can the heart that loves God above all things consent to form the closest of all unions, typical of the union of Christ and the Church, with one who she knows has no sympathy with her religion, no love of God in his heart, and who despises her own sweet and holy Mother?" (vol. xix. p. 25.) If you notice in the confessional a rising affection in a Catholic heart for a non-Catholic, strive to check it: it is forbidden fruit. And if the young person tells you, "Oh, I cannot help it; I love him," tell her such a love is a sinful passion, which a Christian is bound in conscience to subdue, and God will not refuse her the necessary grace to overcome the temptation. If you meet the non-Catholic party you may also endeavor to dissuade him by telling him frankly that in all probability he will make himself miserable by marrying a Catholic: his future wife and children could not have for him the real affection they should have for a Christian husband and father.

6. It would be highly imprudent and unbecoming for a priest to meddle in the arrangement of marriages, except in some rare cases where his pastoral office obliges him to interfere and to prevent some positive evil. Frassinetti urges a parish priest, "whenever he can do so prudently, to use his influence towards preventing those marriages which, as far as one can judge, are likely to prove unfortunate. Should he see a girl anxious to marry a young libertine, an unbeliever, or a man of bad character, and that the poor creature would thus become a victim of the

Digitized by Google

imprudence or caprice of her parents, he ought to interfere to prevent such a marriage." But if interference is surely to be fruitless or prejudicial to his priestly office he should not offer his counsels. If a respectable girl has been seduced, a priest should persuade the seducer to marry her as soon as possible and save his and her honor. Should the seduced girl be of a frivolous and loose character and the marriage would likely be an unhappy one, he ought not to advise marriage. The consequences of an unfortunate marriage would be more disastrous than the shame and scandal of the seduction. You cannot marry anybody for mere form's sake, as lawyers occasionally request a priest to do. When a young man is arrested for a case of bastardy and put in jail, he is frequently released on condition that he marries the woman on the spot. Find out if he be really willing to live with her as man and wife and provide for her. In most cases the man is willing, though he be innocent, to marry her simply to get out of jail. A dexterous question may unmask him: You would not marry that woman if you could help it, would you? The answer may spoil the lawyer's success in settling the woman's case, but it will prevent the profanation of matrimony.

7. Without premonition a bridal party appear at the priest's house and ask his Reverence to make them man and wife without delay. Should he refuse the favor, they boldly threaten to go to a Protestant minister or civil magistrate, who will do it cheerfully and cheaply. In such a case the zeal and prudence of a good priest are sorely tried. He knows that if he does not comply with their wishes they will commit a dreadful sacrilege, and blighten the beginning of their wedded life with the curse of the Church. And yet he cannot marry them without the required dispensations, whatever they be. If they belong to another diocese, he must gently refer them to their bishop;

Digitized by Google

if they are in their own diocese, he should endeavor to make them wait patiently until the necessary dispensations can be obtained, on the supposition that they have sufficient reasons to advance. Should they, however, be unwilling to postpone their marriage and be determined to be married at once, he must show them the malice of their wicked intention, remind them of the fearful consequences of "marrying outside the Church," and then commend their souls to the mercy of God.

8. In some places of the United States a great aversion exists to the publication of the banns of marriage. A prudent priest will overcome this difficulty by constantly inculcating the laws of the Church, and by showing the honor, and not the disgrace, as some foolishly imagine, of having their names proclaimed *in facie Ecclesiae.* O'Kane gives the translation of the form of proclamation from the Roman Ritual, but does not consider it necessary to adhere strictly to this form, though it might be difficult to find another better or more convenient for the purpose. "The publication is to be made in a clear, distinct voice, that it may be heard by the congregation; and if there be a dispensation from one or two publications, this should be distinctly notified, so that those who know of any impediment may understand their obligation of declaring it without delay" (*Notes*, n. 1085). It is customary in America to give only the Christian and family names of the parties, with place of residence. The usual form is: *The banns of marriage are published for the first (second or third) time between John Smith, of this parish, and Mary Brown, of St. Joseph's parish.*

9. The best preparation for marriage is an innocent life. Chaste hearts should be united in marital love whilst pure hands are joined at the foot of the altar. Gay flowers and costly apparel are poor substitutes for purity. "A heart defiled is a sad recommendation for the nuptial blessing,

Digitized by Google

and a fraud on the marriage contract" (St. Alphonsus). Engagements and courtships seem necessary preludes to marriage; Christians must keep them unstained. Parents should keep a watchful eye on their children, and not allow them to associate out of their presence. They should forbid all secret interviews, lonely walks and drives, and every familiarity contrary to Christian modesty. A decent young man will never object to such salutary restrictions which the parents of his bride may place on him; he will esteem her all the more. The parties to be married should call at the priest's house a month before the marriage takes place. The priest makes the necessary inquiries about possible impediments, the necessary Christian knowledge for the education of children. He also must instruct them on the sacred character of matrimony and the importance of the step which they are about to take. Teach them that the happiness of their married life does not consist in the sentimental union of hearts: sentimental love depends on physical causes, and is fickle and unreal; they must consequently base their love on God to make it endure. Exhort them, therefore, to prepare for a worthy reception of the sacrament by a good confession of their sins. A general confession might be opportune and highly useful to draw down God's graces on their union. *Admoneantur praeterea conjuges, ut antequam contrahant, sua peccata diligenter confiteantur, et ad SS. Eucharistiam atque ad matrimonii sacramentum suscipiendum pie accedant; et quomodo in eo recte et christiane conversari debeant, diligenter instruantur ex divina scriptura, exemplo Tobiae et Sarae, verbisque Angeli Raphaelis eos edocentis, quam sancte conjuges debeant convivere* (*Rit. Rom.*).

10. Insist that the marriage take place in the morning with the Mass *pro sponso et sponsa*. The nuptial blessing cannot be given outside of Mass, and those who would be married in the afternoon or evening would be deprived of

Digitized by Google

this immense spiritual benefit. Wherefore a zealous priest will make it possible to receive it afterwards. Carefully observe the beautiful ceremonies which surround the sacrament, and retain whatever pious custom may exist in your congregation. Always address a few words of instruction before you impart the last blessing. Prevent the organist from playing sensuous airs, frivolous marches, or operatic songs as the bridal party leaves the house of God. Do not take any part in the wedding festivities which may take place after the celebration in the church. *Non licet interesse, quod non licet habere* (St. Hieron.). If you are invited to the wedding breakfast and dinner, and if it be customary to have the priest present, then call at the house for a few moments to say some pleasant and congratulatory words and leave your blessing to the guests, but do not sit down to eat and drink. It does not become a Catholic priest to join in such convivialities. A priest never loses, but generally increases, the respect of his people by refusing to attend dinner parties. *Convivia tibi vitanda sunt saecularium, et maxime eorum, qui honoribus tument. Facile contemnitur clericus qui saepe vocatus ad prandium, ire non recusat. Nunquam petentes, raro accipiamus rogati. Nescio enim quomodo ipse qui deprecatur, ut tribuat, cum acceperis, viliorem te judicat; et mirum in modum, si eum rogantem contempseris, plus te posterius veneratur* (St. Hieronymus, *Epist. ad Nepot.*).

Digitized by Google

PART II.

SACRAMENTALS.

---

§ 42.

Nature and Use of the Sacramentals.

1. Besides the seven sacraments instituted by Christ Himself, the Church possesses certain rites and ceremonies which confer grace, and, on account of the resemblance they bear to the sacraments, are called *Sacramentals*. There is this essential difference between sacraments and sacramentals, that the former are instituted directly by the Son of God and operate infallibly *ex opere operato*, while the latter are directly of ecclesiastical institution, and produce their effects through the prayers and blessings of the Church—*ex opere operantis*. The sacramentals free from temporal and spiritual evils and bring blessings for the soul and body of the Christian. Theologians maintain that venial sins are remitted by the sacramentals.

2. Christ gave His Church the power to institute sacramentals when He said to His apostles: *In nomine meo daemonia ejicient: linguis loquentur novis: serpentes tollent: et si mortiferum quid biberint, non eis nocebit: super aegros manus imponent et bene habebunt* (Mark xvi. 17, 18). The Church has attached the conferring of these extraordinary graces to certain signs and symbols to increase the devotion and strengthen the confidence of Christians for the sacramentals. At their ordination priests

Digitized by Google

receive the power to bless, *ut quaecunque benedixerint, benedicantur* (*Pontif. Rom.*). This power is not given to the priest for his own personal sanctification, but that his consecrated hands be lifted in blessing his people and in drawing down on their souls and bodies the dew of heavenly graces. *Sacerdos debet benedicere* (ibid.).

3. The priest himself ought to entertain a holy reverence and respect for the sacramentals of the Church. A lively faith is wanting either in the priest or in his people at a church where the sacramentals are ignored and neglected. The priest should often explain the nature and use of the various sacramentals, and offer his subjects plenty of opportunities to receive and apply them. While not attributing an infallible effect to their use, and being forbidden to regard them as *charms*, the people should place the greatest confidence in objects blessed by the priest in the name of the Church. *Curent imprimis concionatores et animarum rectores, ut harum rerum naturam, significationem, rectumque usum fidelibus exponant, ac saepius inculcent. Iis qui sapientiae et ingenio suo nimis innituntur, persuadeant haec, levia licet minutaque videantur, non esse contemnenda, quum ad pie vivendum et salutem consequendam non parum proficiant. Rudiorem vero plebeculam, quae contrario errore abripitur, etiam atque etiam moneant, ne rebus ipsis nimiam efficaciam tribuat, neque eas caeca quadam et immodica fiducia servet, et superstitiosa veneratione prosequatur, quasi ipsae per sese, sine pia mentis dispositione, plurimum possent* (Balt. Conc. II. 350).

§ 43.

Exorcisms.

1. Through one of the Minor Orders the priest possesses the power to cast out devils and destroy their in-

Digitized by Google

fluence. Even after the death of Christ the evil spirits retained power to vex and tempt man, and the weaker our faith in their existence and the less we realize their presence the more powerful these unseen foes will grow against us. In Baptism we have renounced the devil and all his works, but *he* will not renounce *us* until we are safely in the arms of Jesus. He is ever near us and around us to bring dangers, to set temptations, and to ruin us, if he could, eternally. *Adversarius vester diabolus tanquam leo rugiens circuit, quaerens quem devoret* (1 Pet. v. 8).

2. The presence of the devil with his power of injuring men is not a matter for nursery-tales or ghost-stories: the conflict going on incessantly between ourselves and demons of huge strength is a reality. "We are living," Cardinal Wiseman says, "in a perfect atmosphere of invisible and spiritual enemies, who disturb nature, thwart the providential direction of things, play foully on our imagination, trouble our peace, and try to pervert our reason. They meddle with everything that is of use to man, and endeavor to mar its purposes. They infest every place, in which they tempt and seduce him—from his own dwelling to the house of God itself. Earth and air and water are equally their elements: the first is shaken and convulsed, the second is darkened by thunder-clouds and tortured into whirlwinds, the third is lashed into foaming billows, by their permitted but most malicious agency. The doctrine on this head is clearly apostolical (Ephes. vi. 12), and that it was apprehended by the early Church in a far more lively manner than by our duller faith, the writings of the Fathers clearly prove. Now the Church in all her prayers considers herself appointed to be the antagonist and vanquisher of this hostile crew; and while she shows her deep and earnest conviction of the difficulties of the contest, she betrays no uneasiness about its results. She hath power to

Digitized by Google

rule and to quell these spirits of darkness" (*Essays on Various Subjects*, vol. i. 414).

3. Exorcisms are used not only against persons bodily possessed by the devil, but against any animate or inanimate creature. Substances which are employed in some solemn rite are exorcised so as to wrest them from the hold and misuse of the demons. At the consecration of a church the cross is planted at the door and marked repeatedly on the walls to protect the sacred place and the faithful who are to worship in it against the wicked attacks of the devil. Water, salt, and oil, used for sacramental unction, are first exorcised; the same is done at the blessing of bells, crosses, medals, and reliquaries. "The blessing upon them and upon other similar objects is that wherever they are presented, sprinkled, or used evil spirits may be put to flight and their malice and wiles be confounded" (Wiseman, l. c.).

4. In these exorcisms the bishop or priest acts with a sublime power and authority against a fearful enemy. The solemn and elevated tone of the prayers of the Ritual strike terror and dismay into the camp of the infernal legions. "In the name of the Church the priest is striving against the devil for mastery: he is wresting from his grip, by a strong hand, one of God's creatures which he has enslaved; or he is beating off legions of dark, gloomy spirits, who flap their unclean wings, and with sullen flight retreat beyond the precincts from which they are driven,* and hovering around them, as vultures kept from their prey, dare not violate the seal of Christ's holy cross placed upon its anointed doors" (Wiseman, l. c.).

* Our great American poet pictures the Catholic belief in the sacramentals in the prologue of his *Golden Legend*. During the night, whilst a storm is raging around the spire of Strasburg Cathedral, Lucifer with his powers of darkness is trying to tear down the cross. But the devils are powerless against the cross, because guardian spirits are protecting the holy emblem; nor can they hurl the vociferous bells from their windy

Digitized by Google

§ 44.

Blessings.

1. All nature is subservient to the Church of God. The richest produce of the earth is chosen for her service: the wheat and grape, the two noblest products, must serve as sacramental species to veil the presence of her divine Spouse. The bee must toil for her sacrificial light, and the green olive yield its succulency to furnish her household. In visible and sensible substances she also finds mystical allusions to religious truths and striking illustrations of the spiritual world. By her blessings she gives to merely material objects a value and sacredness which in the natural course they did not possess. "She raises this lower sphere, through its alliance with faith, into a region of purer and holier existence, where the direct splendor of the divinity is the sun that warms and fructifies, gives life and growth. . . . She does not merely pray that it may be so: but she wills that it be. Blessings are inherent in her words, her supplications carry the force of a compact with Heaven" (Wiseman, l. c.).

2. The blessings of the Church are divided into *benedictiones constitutivae* and *benedictiones invocativae*. Con-

tower to the pavement, because these bells are baptized with holy water and anointed with sacred oil. They finally give up in despair.

"Baffled! baffled!
Inefficient,
Craven spirits! leave this labor
Unto Time, the great destroyer!
Come away, ere night is gone!

"Onward! onward!
With the night-wind,
Over field and farm and forest,
Lonely homestead, darksome hamlet,
Blighting all we breathe upon!"

Digitized by Google

stitutive blessings are those by which persons and objects are set apart for divine service. The Church blesses *persons* who dedicate themselves to her service, as it is done at the conferring of Tonsure, Minor Orders, and Subdeaconship; at the inauguration and coronation of the Pope; at the blessing of abbots and abbesses; at the reception and profession of members of the different religious Orders; at the coronation of emperors and kings. Constitutive blessings of objects used for divine service are rich and varied and of intrinsic beauty, enhancing the glory of the spouse of Christ. We mention only the principal blessings of this kind.*

3. Constitutive Blessings—*Consecration of a Church.* —When a church is consecrated the edifice is transformed into a temple of God. The ceremonies prescribed by the *Pontificale* are of gorgeous splendor and magnificence. Three times the bishop sprinkles the exterior walls with holy water, and before he enters by the main door he makes the sign of the cross on the threshold. With the Gregorian water (water mingled with salt, ashes, and wine) he sprinkles the inside walls and the floor in the form of the cross. After the whole building has been placed under the protection of the crucified Redeemer, the relics of saints are carried in solemn procession to the altar, where they are deposited under appropriate ceremonies. The five crosses chiselled on the altar in remembrance of the five wounds of Our Lord are now anointed; the same is done with the twelve consecration crosses on the walls, in memory of the twelve apostles. The meaning of these beautiful ceremonies, accompanied by sublime prayers, should occasionally be explained to the

* See the chapter on "The Sacramentals" in the instructive book, *The Means of Grace*, adapted from the German of Rolfus and Braendle, by the Rev. Dr. Brennan (New York: Benziger Brothers). For circulation among the people we would especially recommend a little book published by the same firm, and entitled *The Sacramentals of the Holy Catholic Church. By Rev. A. A. Lambing.* 50 cts. a copy; 100 copies for $25.00.

Digitized by Google

people, either before or after the consecration of a church, or on its anniversary.

4. *Bells* are blessed with stately ceremonies and instructive prayers before they are hung in the lofty tower to proclaim the praises of the Lord on high, and to cheer sorrowful man on earth, or reprove the laggard and chide the boisterous. The different functions of the consecrated bell are announced in the celebrated Latin verses:

Laudo Deum verum, plebem voco, congrego clerum,
Defunctus ploro, nimbum fugo, festa decoro.

It should be rung especially before divine service, at the gospel and elevation of Mass; for baptisms, marriages, and funerals; in a storm to avert calamities. Three times in the day the bell should ring the *Angelus* to proclaim the mystery of the Incarnation and to salute the Mother of Jesus. Cardinal Wiseman says of the Angelus: "A short, uniform, common, and in some sense public, but withal in many respects a personal and private, devotion within each one's reach, wherever he may be; not likely to interfere with any duty, or to interrupt detrimentally any occupation; yet having its stated hours, so as to constitute it a rite or compendious office of the Church. This view of it, independent of any other consideration, should make it be cherished and practised by Catholics everywhere. . . . Why may not the sound of the bell at stated times invite to spiritual as well as to corporal refreshment; and at its sound the pen might stop, and the piano-forte pause, and the needle be laid down, while all the family unite in the Angelus; and those who are engaged in more homely duties have a momentary respite, to blend the functions of Mary with those of Martha?" (*Essays*, i. 515, 524.) Let us boldly ring the Angelus bell, and not fear to injure the sensitive hearing of our non-Catholic neighbors. When they once understand its summons they may be led to think

Digitized by Google

more reverently of her whom the Father greeted by the angelic messenger. Did the Angelus even charm, for a time, the impious heart and the proud mind of Byron, when he sang:

"Ave Maria! blessed be the hour,
The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft!
While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
Or the faint, dying day-hymn stole aloft,
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest-leaves seemed stirred with prayer!
Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of love!
Ave Maria! may my spirits dare
Look up to thine and to thy Son above"?

5. *Holy Water* is one of the most frequently used sacramentals. It is blessed every Sunday. We only have to pay attention to the prayers in order to understand the wonderful effects of holy water. The people are sprinkled with it before Mass, that they may be cleansed from venial sins and appear holy in the presence of the Lord of hosts. In every Catholic family there should be, in a clean vessel, a constant supply of holy water, which serves to chase away evil spirits, to banish bodily diseases, and to preserve peace and comfort in the Christian home.

6. *Candles* are blessed for divine service on the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, on Candlemas-day. They must be of beeswax; candles of any other substance cannot be blessed. The burning candle signifies Christ, Our Lord. *Recte cereus Christum significat propter tria, quae in eo sunt: lychnum namque animam, cera corpus et lumen divinitatem significat* (Durandus, *Rationale*). The lighted candles around the altar remind us of the bright spirits that surround the throne of God with burning love. They are also a sign of joy at the coming and at the presence of Christ. St. Jerome says we light the blessed candles *non utique ad fugandas tenebras, sed ad signum*

Digitized by Google

laetitiae demonstrandum. We are to follow the Light of the world, the *lumen de lumine*, through the darkness of ignorance and injustice. A lighted candle is presented to the newly baptized that he should walk by the blessed light of faith enkindled in his soul; and when the course of life is run and the natural light is flickering away, a blessed candle is placed in the hand of the dying Christian to light up the dark path of death and lead him to the full light of the eternal day. *Lux perpetua lucebit Sanctis tuis, Domine, et aeternitas temporum.*

7. *Ashes*, the symbol of decomposition and universal destruction, are blessed on Ash Wednesday and placed on the heads of the faithful to remind them of their own certain dissolution, and of the necessity of doing penance during the holy season of Lent. In distributing them the priest pronounces the words of Genesis: *Memento, homo, quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris.* The ashes are made by the burning of palm branches blessed on Palm Sunday of the previous year.

8. *Palms* are blessed on the Sunday before Easter to remind us of Christ's solemn entrance into Jerusalem, when the people strewed His way with branches of palm. The palm is an emblem of victory, the triumph of our blessed Redeemer over sin and hell. The effects of this sacramental are indicated in the prayers used at the blessing: *Benedic hos ramos palmae... ut in quemcunque locum introducti fuerint, tuam benedictionem habitatores loci illius consequantur, et omni adversitate effugata, dextera tua protegat... Praesta quaesumus ut illi fidei viam preparemus, de qua remoto lapide offensionis, et petra scandali, frondeant apud te opera nostra justitiae ramis; ut ejus vestigia sequi mereamur.*

9. *Incense* is blessed and offered to God at the most solemn and important rites of the Church. In the Old Law incense was used for divine service at the express command

Digitized by Google

of God. With the gift of incense the Magi honored the divinity of the new-born Saviour. Burning incense is the emblem of devout prayer. *Dirigatur, Domine, oratio mea, sicut incensum in conspectu tuo.* As the incense rises in fleecy clouds of sweetest fragrance, so our prayer should rise to the presence of the Lord and bring down upon us the blessings of His divine mercy. *Incensum istud a te benedictum, ascendat ad te, Domine: et descendat super nos misericordia tua.*

10. Invocative Blessings are those which are pronounced over persons for their own temporal or spiritual benefit or over objects for the benefit of those who devoutly use them. To the latter class we refer the following articles, which the Church blesses for the pious usage of her children:

(*a*) *Bread* is blessed on the festivals of St. Blase, St. Agatha, and St. Gebhard, and especially at Easter. *Imitantur enim et quodammodo adumbrant sacrosanctum illum Panem, qui manna longe praestantior de coelo descendit, quemque pie manducando multa membra unum Christi corpus efficimur* (Conc. Balt. II. 345).

(*b*) *Wine* on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, in remembrance of a miracle wrought by the holy apostle. In drinking St. John's wine we should imbibe the charity of the beloved disciple.

(*c*) *Fragrant herbs* on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, reminding us of Mary's exalted virtues and obtaining the blessing to imitate them.

(*d*) The *Agnus Dei*, consisting of wax, blessed by the Pope once only every seven years, on Easter Tuesday. Wearing the *Agnus Dei*, we should remember the innocence and meekness of the Lamb of God.

(*e*) *Crosses, pictures, statues, medals, rosaries,* and *scapulars.*

11. The Church blesses *persons* on certain occasions,

Digitized by Google

communicating to them special benefits for special ends. We have mentioned already the blessing of the bride and bridegroom at the Nuptial Mass, and the Papal blessing *in articulo mortis*. The blessings of a bishop and of a priest at Mass are classed among sacramentals. The blessing of St. Blase, on the third day of February, is eagerly sought wherever it is imparted. Two blessed candles are held under the chin of the person, who kneels before the priest, and St. Blase is invoked to preserve him from throat troubles.

12. *Churching*, i.e., the blessing of women after childbirth, is a sacramental of great antiquity. This ceremony is not of obligation, but no truly Christian woman will dispense herself from it; on the contrary, a Catholic mother will be desirous of imitating the humility of the Blessed Virgin; she will make her first visit to the house of God, to pray and offer thanksgiving, and to ask the blessing of the priest. Women whose children are illegitimate have no right to this benediction. Custom generally determines the time when women are churched. In some places they wait for a month. It may be given at any convenient time after childbirth. It should take place in church, as the very name indicates; but on missions, where the church is too far distant, it may be given to those who ask for it at their homes. Wherever it can be received without serious inconvenience, the priest should exhort those who appear to ignore the importance and salutary effects of it to comply with the ancient and holy custom of being churched after each childbirth. *Pium illum ritum ac morem, qui apud Christianas mulieres a partu recentes dudum invaluit, a nostris vero persaepe negligitur, accedendi ad Ecclesiam ad gratias agendas et benedictionem petendam, commendent animarum pastores, ejusque originem et causas, data occasione, explicent. Contemnitur enim a multis, quia ignoratur aut male intelligitur* (Conc. Balt. II. 245).

Digitized by Google

THIRD BOOK.

PASTORAL DIRECTION.

§ 45.

The Divine Fire.

1. *Ignem veni mittere in terram, et quid volo nisi ut accendatur?* (Luke xii. 49.) Christ kindled this fire in the hearts of His apostles, and through them in the souls of all the faithful priests of His Church. This fire shows itself by a supernatural zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. It had been announced as the characteristic mark of the ministers of the new dispensation by the prophet Jeremias (xvi. 16): *Ecce ego mittam multos venatores et venabuntur eos, et piscatores multos, et piscabuntur eos.* It is the talisman of the Catholic priest which makes his ministry so fruitful and gives his actions a superhuman energy and effect. Without this zeal he cannot convert sinners to God, as St. Gregory the Great remarks, *qui non ardet, non incendit.* Through this zeal he willingly sacrifices the faculties of soul and body to the service of his Master, and joyfully declares with the Apostle of the Gentiles: *Ego autem libentissime impendam, et superimpendar ipse pro animabus vestris* (2 Cor. xii. 15).

2. A zealous priest does not discharge his duties mechanically and by routine, like some military officer or railroad official. He is not satisfied with hearing confessions

Digitized by Google

at stated times, attending the sick when he is sent for, visiting school when he is obliged to do so, preaching on general topics without heed to particular wants and local abuses; no, a priest who is filled with the divine fire does not content himself with the work he is strictly required to perform. He treats his Lord more nobly; he makes work for himself; he seeks new ways and new opportunities to promote God's *greater* glory and continually to effect a *greater* good among his flock. He is always planning new means to increase the generosity of the faithful for works of religion, charity, and education, to spread among them a fervent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary Immaculate, to add to the number of monthly and weekly communicants. He strives to multiply himself in his ministry by powerful agencies which he calls to his assistance: he encourages brother priests or members of a religious community or some individuals of his congregation prominent by virtue and intelligence, to help the poor and sick, to instruct the ignorant, and to bring back the erring. Each evening he will examine his conscience before his Master in the Holy Eucharist to see his omissions and negligences and to begin the following day with more zeal and fervor.

"The day is drawing to its close;
And what good deeds, since first it rose,
Have I presented, Lord, to Thee,
As offerings of my ministry?
What wrong repressed, what right maintained,
What struggle passed, what victory gained,
What good attempted and attained?
Feeble at best is my endeavor!
I see, but cannot reach, the height
That lies forever in the light,
And yet forever and forever,
When seeming just within my grasp,
I feel my feeble hands unclasp,
And sink discouraged into night!
For Thine own purpose Thou hast sent
The strife and the discouragement."

—LONGFELLOW'S *Golden Legend.*

Digitized by Google

3. True zeal is based on humility. A truly zealous priest detests foolish pride and vainglory. He seldom speaks of his own undertakings and labors for the interests of his people. He does not point out boastingly the improvements made since *he* came to the place. He never blames his predecessor for material or moral deficiencies in the parish; on the contrary, he will often find a good word to say in honorable memory of those that have gone before him. He is not anxious to hear himself praised for his fine singing or grand preaching; he is only anxious to please God and save many souls. *Sit itaque sacerdotalis zelus purus ac omnis humanae sordis expers. Gentis nesciat diversitatem; nec originis, coloris, vel conditionis differentias curet. Illi non sit "gentilis et Judaeus, Barbarus vel Scytha, servus et liber; sed omnia et in omnibus Christus." Non inani vanae gloriae fumo delectari, non humanae laudis desiderio abripi, non etiam de bona hominum opinione sollicitus esse debet. Curam habeat sacerdos de bono nomine, non ut gloriam habeat penes alios, sed ut melius Dei gloriam promovere possit, Illius ad exemplum qui dixit, "Non quaero gloriam meam." Saepius enim vel contemptum vel odium mundi experiatur necesse est sacerdos, qui zelo flagret; quod quomodo illi superare poterunt, "qui gloriam ab invicem accipiunt, et gloriam quae a solo Deo est, non quaerunt?" Meminerint itaque Dei ministri eorum, quae dixit Paulus: "Si hominibus placerem, servus Christi non essem;" ac maximopere curent, ut in omnibus se exhibeant "sicut Dei ministros, per gloriam et ignobilitatem, per infamiam et bonam famam"* (Conc. Balt. II. 460).

4. Christian prudence must direct the zeal of the priest in all his works and words. Unless the divine fire is turned into safe channels, it will not cleanse and purify, nor will it produce warmth and life; but it will simply devour and destroy. Zeal without prudence leads to fa-

Digitized by Google

naticism and despair. *Prudens vero et secundum scientiam sit zelus sacerdotis omnino oportet. Quid, quando, quomodo loquendum vel palam vel privatim, doceat prudentia, quae sic eum dirigat, ut non mentis vel indolis impetu rapiatur, non agat animi impulsu vel phantasia ductus; sed, omnibus coram Deo mature perpensis, tempora expectabit et momenta, ut, cum hora venerit agendi, quieta ac tranquilla mente ea, quae magis opportuna dijudicaverit peragere possit* (Conc. Balt. II. 462). Let a young priest often repeat the prayer of Solomon (3 Kings iii.), and the Lord will temper his zeal with prudence. Cowardly weakness should never be confounded with prudence, nor negative goodness be held up for praise, in one who has the care of immortal souls. To say of a priest that he is quiet, harmless, keeps to himself, lives in peace with everybody, generally marks one devoid of zeal, indolent, letting things go their way, and disorders grow to an almost incurable state.

5. There is a supernatural strength in the priestly zeal which defies the strongest opposition. It is as firm as a rock when there is question of an absolute duty. The zealous priest will shrink from no danger when the law of God and the rights of the Church have to be upheld; unbending like the oak, he will weather the severest storm without surrendering a single principle. If, for instance, the bishop has refused Christian burial to one unworthy of it, and the friends of the deceased insist on bringing the corpse to the Church, he must, like St. Ambrose, courageously deny the entrance, and, regardless of all consequence, defend the sacred precincts. He must show a strong and holy zeal in the correction of abuses. *In illud praecipue incumbere debet sacerdotum zelus, ut vitia quae in gregibus pullulant forti manu reprimant, et si fieri possit, radicitus evellant. Ea enim zizania sunt quae spargit inimicus homo, ut bonum semen suffocent. Quae si tol-*

Digitized by Google

lantur, uberrimae efflorescent virtutum segetes, fructum usque ad centesimum allaturae (Conc. Balt. II. 468). A priest is not obliged to correct sinners where there is no hope of conversion. Correction need not be administered to persons who profess to be unbelievers and show an open hatred and contempt for the priesthood and religion. In such a case correction proves fruitless and even injurious, as it only more embitters and enrages such people. When correction has to be administered where it probably will bear fruit, it should be done with all the earnestness of the sacred office, but, nevertheless, in a kind and courteous way. Sometimes a person who has given public scandal may be corrected without words or without a special interview for the purpose, by treating him coldly and stiffly when meeting him on the street, by not shaking hands as usual nor paying him an accustomed visit, by not noticing his friendly conduct, or refusing acts of generosity. "Correction, being the child of charity, ought to retain the amiable characteristics of the parent that gave it birth. Nevertheless—inasmuch as charity, ever striving to attain its end, which is the salvation of souls, cannot always accomplish its purpose by mild means, and in fact sometimes finds sterner methods more effective—it would be folly to pretend that it can invariably appear in the garb of gentleness; and, for the self-same reason, correction, which is the offspring of charity, must at times be sharp and vigorous. The example of the mild corrections of Heli, which are censured in Holy Writ, convinces us of this truth" (Frassinetti, *Manual*, P. I., ch. iii). Persevering practice sustained by prayer and study will give a priest that delicate taste which takes an account of the various circumstances of the person, the time and place of correction, and then only determines whether correction is to be administered with severity or affectionate kindness. *Quid vultis? In*

Digitized by Google

virga veniam ad vos, an in charitate et spiritu mansuetudinis? (1 Cor. iv. 21.)

6. Carefully guard the integrity of faith and the purity of morals among your people. Warn them against associating too freely with non-Catholics. The apostolic admonitions hold good everywhere: *Haereticum hominem devita* (Tit. iii. 10); *nolite recipere eum in domum, nec Ave ei dixeritis* (2 John i. 10). The good shepherd is constantly on the alert lest the wolf come and wound or destroy the sheep. He gives the sign of alarm when their safety is in danger. So the zealous priest points out the wolves in sheep's clothing who come into his fold under the name of ex-priests, ex-monks, and escaped nuns to free Catholics from *the yoke of Romanism.* Keep the faithful from attending their lectures, but take no special notice of those paid hirelings. Do not write against them in a public paper, and do not attempt to refute directly their calumnies and pestilential errors; it would advertise them and give them a notoriety for which they are thirsting. Treat them simply with utter contempt, and to offset their falsehoods preach the solid doctrine of God as the most powerful antidote against their pernicious declamations. Withhold your flock from unwholesome pastures where poisonous herbs are growing. Frequently inveigh against the immoral literature of the day, and mention the papers and magazines which should never be found in the hands of Christians.

7. There is one growing evil in America which the Fathers of the last Baltimore Council lament as a stain on the Catholic name and a blighting curse to the country, and which they singled out for the special vigilance of the priest —the desecration of the Sunday by the sale of intoxicating drinks. *Naviter ergo laborent pastores utanturque monitionibus, obsecrationibus, minis immo et poenis, ubi necesse fuerit, ad malum hoc evellendum; atque sic pro parte sua*

Digitized by Google

juvent, ut deleatur unica fere macula, quae inter nos magis magisque diei Dominicae splendorem obscurat (No. 113). After alluding to the sad desecration of the Lord's day in European countries, the same Fathers state in their Pastoral Letter that in America tendencies and influences are at work to bring about a similar result. While not advocating Sunday laws that would forbid innocent enjoyments consistent with the sacredness of the day, they appeal to all Catholics without distinction "not only to take no part in any movement tending towards a relaxation of the observance of Sunday, but to use their influence and power as citizens to resist in the opposite direction. There is one way of profaning the Lord's day which is so prolific of evil results that we consider it our duty to utter against it a special condemnation. This is the practice of selling beer or other liquors on Sunday, or of frequenting places where they are sold. This practice tends more than any other to turn the day of the Lord into a day of dissipation, to use it as an occasion of breeding intemperance. While we hope that Sunday laws on this point will not be relaxed, but even more rigidly enforced, we implore all Catholics for the love of God and of country never to take part in such Sunday traffic, nor to patronize nor countenance it. And we not only direct the attention of all pastors to the repression of this abuse, but we also call upon them to induce all of their flocks that may be engaged in the sale of liquors to abandon as soon as they can the dangerous traffic, and to embrace a more becoming way of making a living."

§ 46.

A Pattern of the Flock.

1. Pastoral direction derives its main force and effectiveness from the life and general conduct of the priest himself, who should be "a pattern of the flock from the

Digitized by Google

heart" (1 Peter v. 3). The majority of people do not stop to make a distinction between the preacher and his doctrine, between the ambassador and his message: they identify him with the cause he represents. From the sincerity and purity of his life they judge about the importance and truth of the religion he is teaching. By his virtuous example chiefly the priest directs souls committed to him unto salvation. As the shepherd, so will be his sheep. *Qualis rex, talis grex.* He is the model which the faithful are to copy. He goes before them and they cheerfully follow his lead. *Ante eas vadit: et oves illum sequuntur* (John x. 4). As pastor he cannot keep aloof from his people nor give himself up to the practice of austerities, and to complete retirement like an anchorite. He must live in the world and bear with its harmless follies and fashions; he must mingle with the people, be sociable and affable to them, hold intercourse with persons of all classes. And in all his relations with the people of the world he is to conduct himself in such an admirable manner that the world will never detect anything in him to scandalize or even offend it. This is very difficult, but the long ascetical training of a priest, commencing with his college days, and the sacramental grace of his state make it possible. The priest is to be a man of God and a man of the world at the same time; he is to be a perfect Christian and a perfect gentleman.

2. Our clerical vocation does not forbid us to be up to the time in everything which is refined and cultured; on the contrary, the Church desires us to be leaders of men in every civilizing factor. We must accommodate ourselves to surroundings and take things as they are, as long as they are not positively bad. To expect that the world would abandon its tastes and customs to suit us would be unpardonable selfishness. We must, therefore, conform ourselves to the usages and forms of the country in which we live.

Digitized by Google

We must scrupulously observe all the rules and details of social etiquette. But there is another etiquette which we cannot dispense with as priests, and which not only the Church, but even the world, expects us to follow minutely: it is the *clerical* etiquette. It does not do away with social politeness: it rather supposes and ennobles it, as grace does with nature. In the Council of Trent the Church fixed the universal canon of this clerical etiquette: *Sic decet omnino Clericos in sortem Domini vocatos vitam moresque suos omnes componere, ut habitu, gestu, incessu, sermone, aliisque omnibus rebus nil nisi grave, moderatum ac religione plenum prae se ferant; levia etiam delicta, quae in ipsis maxima essent, effugiant* (sess. xxii., De Ref., c. 1). The Second Baltimore Council explains and expands this canon: *Ubicumque fuerint, sive iter agant, sive per vias deambulent, sive sermones inter se vel cum saeculo deditis misceant, tum incessu et gestu, tum vultu ipso et voce, modestiam quae decet ac gravitatem praeseferant. Nimiam vocis elationem, risum immodicum, scurriles jocos, quidquid denique animi haud bene compositi indicium est, summo studio devitent. Verba liberiora, procacia, impia, ne aliorum quidem dicta referendo, proferent; alios ea proferentes, si aliter nequeunt, ore ac vultu repriment coerceantque* (No. 152).

3. A fixed clerical etiquette prescribes the distinctive dress which the priest is to wear at home and abroad. He always appears in his cassock when at home or about his house. When away from his residence, or in travelling, he wears the Roman collar and a black or dark suit of clothes becoming his clerical state. He must avoid both extremes of dressing too fashionably and costly and too slovenly and cheaply. While shabby, dirty, threadbare clothes look disgraceful on a priest, expensive suits of the finest material according to the latest style are likewise reprehensible in him. Creased pantaloons, a short or cut-

Digitized by Google

away coat, patent-leather shoes excite ridicule and disrespect for a priest. The Second Baltimore Council gives binding directions for the American clerical wardrobe: *Venustiores quasdam et elegantiores vestium formas, quae novae in dies inveniuntur, aspernentur et respuant; cum vel graviores inter saeculares homines ab istis abhorreant. Memores tamen sint dignitatis suae; neque vestitu et habitu horridos et incultos se praebeant. Monet S. Carolus, eximius ille disciplinae sacrae restitutor et vindex, "ne in habitu clericali aut studiosius exquisita cultus elegantia, aut nimis abjecta negligentia et affectatae sordes appareant"* (No. 148).

4. The priest's health requires that he take an adequate amount of recreation to preserve it for his laborious duties. He should daily have some bodily exercise and mental diversion. Walking seems to most men as indispensable as food and sleep. Our various functions offer plenty of chances for healthy exercises; we may combine the *jucundum cum utili* by a visit to the sick-room, to a poor family, to the house of a new-comer, by an occasional drive or excursion to the residence of a neighboring priest. The necessity of an annual vacation for men in good health may be called in question. Many priests have lived in robust health to a high old age without the annual vacation, whilst many others have caught the seeds of some fatal disease by imprudent exposure or violent exercise in vacation. It is certainly a curious fact that some men grow delicate in health as their purses grow fat. It is then that they advocate the absolute necessity of seeking a warmer clime in winter and the cooling breezes of an ocean voyage in summer, as their *Celebret* reads, *recuperandae sanitatis causa.* How can a priest who is attached to his people leave them for several months, without real necessity? What fond mother could enjoy herself away from her children for even three weeks? There are certain amuse-

Digitized by Google

ments which a priest can indulge in only with moderation. There is no harm in occasionally strolling through the woods with gun and dog; it could not be called a *venatio clamorosa.* Fishing would be even better suited to the peaceful avocation of the cleric as an excellent pastime or rather relaxation. A game of cards with a brother priest might be a useful recreation. But when such amusements become the ends of daily life instead of being the means to make that daily life more useful for the Church; when card-playing, for example, turns into a regular passionate gambling for money,—then it is time to stop, as such sports are detrimental to the sacred character of the priest and injurious to his work among his fellow-men.

5. One of the most necessary sacerdotal virtues for pastoral direction—if not *the* most necessary—is disinterestedness. Its opposite vice, avarice, is the most serious hindrance to his priestly mission, making his words without weight and his ministrations without effect. A priest who is covetous of money and of miserly habits is a stumbling-block to the faithful and a curse to himself. Through avarice one of the twelve apostles was lost; through the same sin men are ruined who were destined to be the pillars of holy Church and the mainstay of the people. Which one of us has ever heard of the sincere conversion of a miser? *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis, auri sacra fames?* If this be true with laymen, how much more with clergymen? A priest who gathers money to hoard it loses all shame and delicacy of feeling. He deceives himself with the excuses that he has to provide for the future, for old age and infirmity; that he is saving it all for the Church after his death. Should his parents or near relatives be poor and in want, it is his duty to relieve them; but it is criminal to make his office the means of enriching his relations. How can he wean people from the love of money when he cannot say with St. Peter, "*argentum et*

Digitized by Google

aurum non est mihi"? (Acts iii. 6.) What reward may he expect who leaves his money to the Church because he cannot take it with him to the grave? What faith in Divine Providence has he who fears want and poverty in the future? *Principiis obsta.* Do not be anxious to get presents from the people. Put your money to good use as you receive it. *Facite vobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis* (Luke xvi. 9). Keep no personal account in a savings-bank, though you act wisely by taking an insurance policy in a Catholic society or reliable company. This gives no scandal to the faithful, and may benefit a poor parent or a charitable institution. Never purchase a farm or estate in your personal name with money received from the people. Always follow the divine advice: *Quaerite primum regnum Dei et justitiam ejus, et haec omnia adjicientur vobis* (Matt. vi. 33). It has never happened in America that people allowed a faithful priest to starve; they would rather starve themselves. If the following decree of the Second Baltimore Council is observed, the priest will avoid the very suspicion of avarice: *Edicimus, ne rerum bonorumve quorumlibet, aut pecuniae, mercaturam faciant; ne quaestuosas suo nomine, vel sub alieni nominis involucro negotiationes exerceant; ne aliena praedia lucri causa conducant; ne pro aliis fide jubeant; ne aliorum in negotiis procuratores, inconsulto Episcopo, fiant; ne cujusvis curam ac tutelam, praeterquam suorum, nisi Episcopo consentiente, suscipiant* (No. 157). Remember these two things: never go on a bond for another; never indorse a note, if it were to save the best man from certain bankruptcy.

Digitized by Google

§ 47.

The Rectory.

1. A PRIEST'S house should be a perfect model of the Christian home. There should be nothing in it smacking of luxury or worldly desire: peace and sobriety should reign in it supreme. The image of the crucified Redeemer should greet you in every room; pictures of the Blessed Virgin and the saints, of the Pope and the bishop, of the former rectors, should decorate the walls. Frivolous prints and profane paintings with nude figures are both repulsive and scandalous, no matter how artistic and classical they may be esteemed by the world. The name of a Raphael cannot cover some of his artistic nudities. All the furniture should be simple, plain, and solid. A parlor fitted up in modern style looks ridiculous in a Catholic rectory, nor does a lady's boudoir fit in it. While avoiding a monastic rigidity, we expect to find everywhere a noble simplicity, which looks more becoming than all the modern "improvements." The sleeping-room of the priest should be especially plain, as befitting the disciple of Him who had not whereon to rest His head. A simple iron bedstead has a soldierly appearance, and recalls the mortified life of the true warrior of Christ. Everything in and about the rectory must be in order and shining neatness. Cleanliness is godliness.

2. No house can be kept neat and tidy by a man, except he be of entirely female proclivities. A good male housekeeper for a priest is a mere speculation, a theoretical ideal of ascetical writers. The proper and practical housekeeper of the priest must be a woman. Happy the priest on the mission who finds a good housekeeper—one who does not ruin his stomach by bad cooking, who hates dust and cats, and saves her master's money. This is a

Digitized by Google

difficult thing in America. *Mulierem fortem, quis inveniet?* To be a priest's housekeeper, especially on a lonely mission, is the loneliest and most cheerless of all female occupations; and, unless one has the grace of state to a high degree, and serves, like Martha, in a spirit of faith, she will not long remain in the Catholic rectory. The priest's housekeeper ought to be a widow or a spinster of advanced years and of settled habits. She should possess an unfeigned piety, dress plainly and modestly, and be kind and civil to everybody. Make her keep to herself and her work: the kitchen is her office, which you must never cross when she is in it. Keep her always at a respectful distance, and never allow her to fix up your room when you are in it; but treat her with real kindness and respect. Pay her wages every month, so that you may dismiss her, if needs be, at any time. Never allow her to eat at the same table with you, nor to inquire into your business, or meddle with your work in any way. Prevent her from receiving useless calls or curious women who come under the plea of assisting her, but in reality to get news about you. If her reputation should grow unsavory, or your own good name should suffer through her in the least, discharge her at once, however capable she may be. For the rest a decree of the Second Baltimore Council, which has not become a dead letter, gives valuable instruction: *Oeconomam, ancillam, aliamve famulam nullam habeat, nisi sit maturioris aetatis, famaque integerrima gaudeat. Nunquam coram illis aut propinquis, si quas apud se habeat, de gregis regimine, de ecclesiae negotiis, de parochianorum vitiis aut defectibus verba faciat. Quod si hujusmodi mulierculis omnes animi sui sensus aliaque silentio tegenda imprudenter prodat; ipsae vero (quod plerumque accidit) fuerint quales Paulus describit, otiosae, quaeque per domos cursitant, et "non solum otiosae, sed et verbosae et curiosae, loquentes quae non*

Digitized by Google

oportet;" tota sacerdotis docentis, monentis, praecipientis auctoritas et imperium corruat necesse est (No. 164).

3. We cannot deprive our bodies of the necessary sleep and food with impunity. The amount of sleep is to be determined by the individual want. Men in ordinary health require seven hours of sleep; more than this would be decidedly unhealthy. Good, plain, substantial food is to keep up the priest's health for the laborious work of the ministry. Coarse food, which may be easily digested by a farmer, a mason, or a machinist, is unsuited to our sedentary life. We must, however, not make a science of eating, or acquire a proficiency in the culinary art, like those *quorum Deus venter est*, who simply live to eat, and who do not eat in order to live. The clerical table ought to be a *mensa modesta et frugalis*, though not always so. On a feast-day or when a brother priest dines with us an additional dish should honor the occasion. Nothing is too good in kitchen and cellar for an episcopal or clerical visitor. A Catholic priest's residence is, and ever has been, the typical place of hospitality all the world over. We ought not to fear fanatical hypocrites to preserve this thoroughly Catholic custom. *Mensam aliquando lautiorem instrui ob festos, qui intercidant, dies aut hospitio invitatos, nil vetat* (Conc. Balt. II. 161). Food is absolutely necessary, wine is accidental. We eat and drink to live. The drink need not be of a strong quality, though a glass of wine or beer may help digestion, grace the table, and enliven friendship. But as excess in drinking is so frequent in our days, the priest should be a model of sobriety, and observe great moderation in drinking: he should be temperate in the true sense of the word. *Caveant omni studio, ne corda eorum et conscientiae graventur crapula et ebrietate. Ebrietatem Chrysologus vocat in alio crimen, in sacerdote sacrilegium; quam ne auditu quidem attingere debet, ne, qui est forma virtutum, vitiorum inde fiat*

Digitized by Google

et inveniatur exemplum. Et sane fieri omnino nequit, ut sacerdos huic vitio deditus officii sacra munera exequatur; quemadmodum ait Isaias: "Sacerdos et propheta nescierunt prae ebrietate, absorpti sunt vino, erraverunt in ebrietate, nescierunt videntem, ignoraverunt judicium." Hinc eam non solum quasi fomentum libidinis et incentivum insaniae, sed etiam tamquam venenum sapientiae damnat Ambrosius. And yet temptations are so manifold, especially when a priest lives alone and at a considerable distance from a confrère. *Principiis obsta.* Realize your weakness, and take the necessary precautions.

4. In many places the rectory is inhabited by more than one priest. It is undoubtedly a great blessing for a rector and his congregation to have an assistant priest who shares in the work of the ministry. A notable sacrifice, if necessary, should be made to secure a curate where there is work for two priests. The care of a thousand souls is sufficient for one man. In America the assistant always lodges in the same house with the rector, which is advantageous to both. They should be one heart and one soul, cheerfully working for the same sacred cause, striving at the same time to make each other happy. *Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum, habitare fratres in unum* (Ps. cxxxii. 1). The good assistant will entertain for his rector the true affection as for an elder brother, while the latter will treat him with every possible condescension and confidence. There must be no secrets between them concerning the workings of the mission. The rector is only *primus inter pares;* he cannot regard his assistant as a slave who has to do the hardest and most disagreeable work, hear all the confessions, attend every sick call, sing all High Masses, except those on week-days that bring a fat stipend. The rector should never forget that the assistant is his equal as a priest; he should take an equal share of the pastoral work, and simply do himself what he expects

Digitized by Google

the other to do. He who gets a curate for the sole reason to rid himself of parish work, is a hireling and unworthy of his calling. The rector is responsible to the bishop for the priestly conduct of his assistant. He should not report him, however, for every little fault or failing which he sees in him. He should try to advise and correct him in a kind and brotherly way. Only when correction has proved fruitless, and the fault is serious and injurious to priest and people, then the bishop is to be informed and the proper remedy to be sought. A rector must not crush every ambition in the young curate who naturally sets out to reform the world; he must not clip his wings before he attempts to fly; on the contrary, he should encourage him in his zealous work, in his preaching and catechising, and thus develop talent which will serve the Church and prepare an efficient pastor. The rector is also responsible to a certain extent for the bodily health of his assistant. He should never overtax his strength by work which he cannot do; he should see that the housekeeper treats him, with regard to eatables, as she treats himself. If the housekeeper is a near relative of the rector, his sister or cousin, she is liable to care first for her own, and look upon the curate as an unwelcome boarder. The American Church has wisely adopted the decree of the Council of Maynooth: *Nullus parochus retineat in domo sua familias affinium et consanguineorum. Quodsi in eadem domo cum parocho habitent ejus coadjutores, volumus ut parochi in praedicta domo nullo modo consanguineas vel affines juniores retineant, nisi permittente Ordinario* (Conc. Balt. III. 81). The assistant must be satisfied with the necessaries, and not lay claim to the best room in the house nor demand the luxuries and comforts of a hotel. *Habentes alimenta, et quibus tegamur, his contenti simus* (1. Tim. vi. 8). He should show himself grateful for everything he receives in the rectory. The management of the house belongs ex-

Digitized by Google

clusively to the rector, and the assistant is not permitted to interfere with it. But in the pastoral work, in the care of souls, he must take the same interest as the rector, though in dependence on the latter. With him the assistant is responsible for all the failures and omissions of the parish work. He ought not to await orders for everything; he must presume them whenever there is a real duty to be performed or an evil to be prevented. He should suggest work and offer himself to do it. He should never allow anybody to speak ill of the rector in his presence; he should strive to increase the respect and reverence which the people owe their pastor. In short, he should be thoroughly loyal to his rector, and earnestly second all his efforts for the good of the people, and thus prepare himself to be one day a successful pastor.

§ 48.

The Friend of the Poor.

1. The history of paganism is stamped with a contempt for man. It is a history of haughty selfishness and cruel indifference towards the neighbor. A poor man was regarded as a social nuisance, as an evil to be avoided or removed. There was no sort of an institution or society in all the heathen world for the relief of the poor and wretched; their condition was utterly hopeless. With the birth of Christ a new world springs into existence: the contemptible and miserable, through Him, become lovable. He became poor to enrich the poor. *Propter vos egenus factus est, cum esset dives* (2 Cor. viii. 9). During His blessed life on earth He displayed the tenderest charity to the lowly and the oppressed, and in His sermon on the mount He declared them blessed: *Beati pauperes spiritu: quoniam ipsorum est regnum coelorum* (Matth. v. 3).

Digitized by Google

2. Since then the poor have always occupied a sacred position in the Catholic Church. They have been justly called by St. Lawrence the treasures of the Church. With tender care and holy affection did the Church at all times treat the poor of Jesus Christ. Her history is the record of mercy and charity to the poor. Leo XIII., in his matchless Encyclical Letter "On the Condition of Labor," traces the outlines of that noble history. "The Church intervenes directly in the interest of the poor, by setting on foot and keeping up many things which it sees to be efficacious in the relief of poverty. Such was the ardor of brotherly love among the earliest Christians that numbers of those who were better off deprived themselves of their possessions in order to relieve their brethren; whence *neither was there any one needy among them* (Acts iv. 34). To the order of deacons, instituted for that very purpose, was committed by the apostles the charge of the daily distributions; and the Apostle Paul, though burdened with the solicitude of all the churches, hesitated not to undertake laborious journeys in order to carry the alms of the faithful to the poorer Christians. Tertullian calls these contributions, given voluntarily by Christians in their assemblies, *deposits of piety;* because, to cite his words, they were employed *in feeding the needy, in burying them, in the support of boys and girls destitute of means and deprived of their parents, in the care of the aged, and in relief of the shipwrecked.* Thus by degrees came into existence the patrimony which the Church has guarded with religious care as the inheritance of the poor. Nay, to spare them the shame of begging, the common mother of rich and poor has exerted herself to gather together funds for the support of the needy. The Church has stirred up everywhere the heroism of charity, and has established congregations of religious and many other useful institutions for help and mercy, so that there might be hardly any kind

Digitized by Google

of suffering which was not visited and relieved." Indeed, it would be an endless task to describe the various institutions of charity and mercy in the Catholic Church, and the number of religious Orders of men and women who lived, labored, prayed, and died for the poor and needy. In the *ages of faith*, palatial buildings received the poor in sickness and old age; cloistered courts gave them shelter and food. We can scarcely realize the damage done to human society by the Protestant Reformation. The work of fifteen centuries in favor of the poor was broken up, and an immense portion of the human race fell back into the wretched condition of pauperism which humanity occupied before *the poor had the Gospel preached.* Poverty existed always, *nam semper pauperes habetis vobiscum* (Matth. xxvi. 11); but *pauperism* was unknown in Christian countries before the days of Martin Luther.

3. The children of the Church have not only looked upon charity to the poor as a Christian duty, but they have always considered it a high and holy privilege to serve their divine Master in His poor. It is related of St. Louis of France and of St. Elizabeth of Hungary that they used to kiss the hands which received their alms. The priest, the representative of Christ, must set the example to the faithful of being ever kind and generous to the poor. He must be the sincere and constant friend of the needy, and though he cannot be in his sacred office a respecter of persons, but treat all under his charge as his dear children, yet he is allowed to incline more to the poor and regard them as his special friends. He is not satisfied with consoling them in their misery and pointing to the hopes of a better world after this life: he presently alleviates their sufferings by providing the necessaries of life. He opens his purse and gives what he can afford, and even more than he can really afford, trusting in God to supply future wants. He never complains and grumbles at the fre-

Digitized by Google

quency of requests; he does not humiliate the deserving poor by the manner of giving, for he does it in so gentle and considerate a way that the poor feel his pleasure and sympathy in giving.

4. St. Thomas gives the following definition of alms: *Opus quo datur aliquid indigenti ex compassione propter Deum* (2, ii. qu. 32, a. 1). In these few pregnant words the Angelic Doctor tells *what*, *to whom*, and *why* should be given. We must give alms *propter Deum*, because we see God in the poor. We must give of the superfluities of our means. We are not obliged to give to others what is required for our own necessities, nor even to distribute what is reasonably required to live according to our position; but that which is over and above belongs to the poor. A right to the possession of money does not give a man the right to use money as he pleases. *Dicendum, quod bona temporalia, quae homini divinitus conferuntur, ejus quidem sunt quantum ad proprietatem; sed quantum ad usum non solum debent esse ejus, sed etiam aliorum, qui ex eis sustentari possunt, ex eo quod ei superfluit* (St. Thom., l. c. qu. 32, a. 5). These truths must occasionally be repeated to those whom God has blessed with a large share of earthly goods. They cannot dispose of them as they like; they must use them for the benefit of others. Moreover, the priest must use his pastoral influence with rich and charitable persons to procure relief for the poor of his flock, without making himself too troublesome or importuning them too frequently. In many cases it would be imprudent to give *money* to the poor. They hardly realize its value; again, they may be tempted to spend it in a wrong way. It is better to buy directly what they need: food, clothing, fuel.

5. In cities, where it is not so easy as in country places to know the really poor, the priest should keep a list of

Digitized by Google

their names, with brief notes on their personal circumstances. A parish Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society is of great advantage for the relief of the poor, but the lion's share remains on the priestly shoulders. Let the almsgiving of the priest possess the qualities indicated in the celebrated distich:

> **Justa sit et prudens, veloxque secreta libensque,**
> **Ordine procedens, omnibus auxilians.**

In assisting the poor, he should prefer the virtuous to the wicked, the more needy to the less needy. Guard against those who feign piety, shed tears, etc. Never give alms in the confessional. Do not listen to woful tales of misery in the confessional; insist that the poor tell their sins and nothing else. If you incidentally detect in the confessional a case of real poverty, direct the penitent to state his case at your house. Orphans should be placed with good and pious relatives or some charitable people well known to you. If this be impossible, they should be sent to a Catholic orphanage; but under no condition should the priest allow them to be sent to a Protestant institution or any public asylum where they will not receive a Catholic education, and in all probability will lose the faith of their parents. Next to orphans, poor widows with little children deserve the charitable attention of the priest, who should give them abundant relief and protect them against the despondencies and temptations of their helpless state. Do not easily refuse to help poor people who neglect their duties as Catholics, who stay away from Mass and confession, send their children to a public school, or speak ill of you. Your charity may convert them sooner than words will do. But never give a cent to those who make a livelihood by sin. Make such persons first leave the way of iniquity before you assist them. Do not throw away your money on professional beggars,

Digitized by Google

loafers, and tramps. The vicious and idle should not be encouraged in their evil ways. When you are in doubt whether a person is an impostor, cross-examine him at length; you will soon receive contradictory answers; puzzle or weary him if his poverty is pretended. Should he grow angry and passionate, you may tell him to *call again*, and then do the same at his next visit.

6. You will show yourself a friend of the poor by inculcating on them the necessity of being industrious and economic. *In sudore vultus tui vesceris pane* (Gen. iii. 19). This is the common lot. Poor people often imagine that great wealth is accumulated simply by good luck. If they examine closely the history of rich folks they will find that wealth was acquired by an extraordinary amount of labor and activity, by continued anxiety and vexation of mind. *Nil sine magno labore dedit mortalibus.* Roasted partridges do not fall from the air on our plates; we must go after them, shoot them, and have them dressed for dinner. The preservation of life by labor is the bounden duty of all. Teach the people to be saving and economic in their habits of living. We need but little to keep us alive and respectable; many of our wants are imaginary. Never purchase a thing for which you cannot pay. Never envy those who enjoy the luxuries of the world: such things only add to human misery. Young men should know whether their intended wives understand cooking and housekeeping. Young people cannot live merely on love.

7. The poor and needy are naturally excused from supporting the priest and from giving the customary offerings at baptisms, marriages, and funerals. Their poverty should never keep them from assisting at Mass. The Third Baltimore Council orders that a special place be reserved in each Church where poor people can hear Mass. This decree is difficult in its practical execution. The decent poor cannot bear to be pointed out as such in a democratic country like

Digitized by Google

America, where we recognize no classes. To put these poor to shame is forbidden in the same decree: *Sedulo vitet quidquid eos contemnendi aut pudefaciendi specimen prae se ferre possit* (No. 289). The most practical way seems to give privately to the really poor free pew-rent tickets so that they may occupy seats like those who pay for them. This is done by many American priests.

§ 49.

Missions.*

1. A MISSION is an extraordinary occasion of reforming and renewing the spiritual life of a Christian by serious meditation on the great truths of religion, and by special offers of divine grace. A mission is to the people what a retreat is to the clergy or to religious communities. "The end of a mission," St. Alphonsus says, "is the conversion of sinners; for by the instructions and sermons of the missions they are convinced of the malice of sin, of the importance of salvation, and of the goodness of God, and thus their hearts are changed, the bonds of vicious habits are broken, and they begin to live like Christians." A zealous rector cannot be indifferent to this special means of saving souls; he will occasionally afford his people the opportunity of making a mission. This should not be done frequently. A mission given every other year loses its novelty and attraction, whilst one given every seven or eight years will

* Examine the interesting and instructive series of papers on "Parish Missions" by experienced and representative missionaries of different religious Orders in the United States, published in the August and September numbers, 1894, of the *American Ecclesiastical Review*. They afford practical hints to the priests how best to utilize and perpetuate the fruits of the missions. Some of these suggestions, however, should be taken *cum grano salis*

Digitized by Google

make a deeper and more lasting impression and produce richer benefits.

2. The Church has always recognized the importance and utility of missions. Benedict XIV. wrote to the bishops of the kingdom of Naples: *Neque novum neque incertum neque a Nobis excogitatum dici potest hoc remedium, quod populi corruptelis corrigendis proponitur. Antiquum illud est, malis curandis aptissimum et fortasse unicum, quod tot Episcopi pietatis gloria insignes magna cum utilitate in suis dioecesibus adhibuerunt, quod nos ipsi toties experti sumus, et vos etiam, qui procul dubio populum vobis commissum sacris Missionibus aliquando recreastis.* And again, the same Pope says: *Viri Missionarii merito comparantur Joanni Apostolo, ejusque sociis, qui acciti fuerunt ex alia navi, ut operam suam praeberent Petro atque Andreae in mari laborantibus, ita ut non possent ob copiam incredibilem piscium retia deducere.* Convinced of the salutary effects of missions and of their necessity, the Fathers of the Second Baltimore Council exhorted priests to have them at stated times. *Valde animarum saluti promovendae prodesset, si in unaquaque dioecesi Missionarii instituerentur, quorum vel unicum vel saltem praecipuum officium esset Missiones, vel exercitia spiritualia statis temporibus variis per dioecesim congregationibus dare. . . Si vero unquam pastorem aliquem hac in re suo officio deesse contigerit, ab Episcopo cogendus erit ad Missionarios accersendos; quod si non fecerit, ipse Episcopus eos mittat* (No. 473). The mission is to be given for the sole spiritual welfare of the faithful, and not for the relief of the priest who finds it difficult to hear all the confessions at Easter time, nor as a chance to take up a special collection for some special purpose. Nothing good will result from a mission which people consider a *money affair.*

Digitized by Google

3. Missions are sometimes necessary and always useful. They are necessary, not absolutely, but relatively, when a number of parishioners are neglecting their religious duties, and all the efforts of a zealous pastor cannot reconcile them with God. They are always useful, because through them sinners are converted, the lukewarm are roused to active Christianity, and the good are made better. Missions strengthen the faith and elevate morals. The course of sermons preached at a mission cannot fail to be most impressive by its matter and manner; it is preached by voices coming from the sanctuary of some hallowed cloister, by ascetic men wearing the habit of some popular saint. Some of the subjects treated in mission sermons cannot be handled on ordinary occasions. Besides, the missionaries are generally strangers to local circumstances and interests: they can speak more independently. A mission also affords an opportunity to make an extraordinary confession or to repair sacrilegious confessions. A successful American missionary describes the benefits of a parish mission in the following beautiful words: "From the opening service, when the people listen with holy joy to the loud call of warning, until the missionary's loving farewell, when all leave the church, their cheeks wet with happy tears, a good mission is a splendid manifestation of Christian faith and love. The thronging masses of men and women, the pale faces of terrified sinners, the ecstatic thanks of pardoned sinners and of their wives and children, the holy consolation of the long hours in the confessional, the torrents of living waters tossing the souls of both preacher and congregation at the sermons—what memories of the battles of war or of politics can compare with these, which fill the glorious years of a missionary's life? The timid are made courageous. If there be but a spark of faith left, the mission breathes upon it and it blazes into a living flame. It is the answer to the

Digitized by Google

prophet's prayer: 'the cowardly are given heart, and the weak knees are strengthened.' Weak before in the face of temptation, the soul now stands its ground bravely. The young, having been caught for a time by the intoxication of youthful liberty, are steadied, are compelled to think, to reckon with conscience and with God. The devout are emancipated from the tyranny of routine; the lukewarm aroused from their lethargy. But the peculiar grace of the mission is the conversion of the sinner, the outright votary of lust or drink, the slave of money, or the victim of sloth. The repentance of hardened sinners and their permanent return to a life of virtue is the mission's special gift. The awakening of the religious sense in persons and classes addicted to vice is the main purpose of a mission. Eternity's endless ages; the Judge upon His throne, and Death, the bailiff of the Judge, standing at the door; the dark gulf, silent, vacant, unmeasurable, impassable, between the joy of heaven and the torment of hell—these are the visions of the sinner's soul during a mission. They are ever accompanied by the pleading form of Jesus Christ, who wins His victory. Conscience, smothered with vice, breaks free and boldly storms the citadel of the sinner's heart, expelling the devil, the world, and the flesh, which had become masters there" (*American Ecclesiastical Review*, August, 1894).

4. A great work, such as a mission is, requires great preparation. A whole year previous to the Mission the rector should engage the missionaries. Their demand in America far exceeds the supply. Take only men whom you know personally or by reputation, belonging to an Order whose members are especially trained for missionary work. If the bishop recommends a missionary band, accept the recommendation. Insist on obtaining the service of missionaries who are effective preachers and sensible

Digitized by Google

confessors. They should be men of God, powerful persuaders and earnest pleaders. You do not want a declaimer who, like a good schoolboy, has learned his lesson well and gets it off with a dramatic effort, or one who rattles off stereotyped sermons on hell and damnation with the purpose of terrorizing people or moving them to tears. You want men filled with the Spirit on high, advocates of justice and mercy. Thank God there is no lack of such men among the different religious Orders of the United States! There is always a considerable number who sacrifice their eminent missionary talents unsparingly and cheerfully in seconding the efforts of secular priests for the salvation of souls—spiritual, heroic men who "stand the strain of never living at home, fighting sin with all their reserves of bodily and mental force, and always departing from the field of victory before the spoils of vainglory can be gathered" (*ibid.*). Do not ask for less than three priests, except in cases where the number of people is exceedingly small. Give the Fathers the number of families under your charge, that they know how many they may expect for confessions. The mission, as a general rule, should last two weeks—neither more nor less.

5. For three or four Sundays before its opening the mission should be clearly announced to the people, and their interest and good will be aroused for this special season of grace. The priest may remind his flock that for their spiritual welfare and to better secure their eternal salvation he has invited missionaries to labor for them. He must excite the respect and esteem of the people for these priests whom many reverently call the *Holy Fathers.* He should have special prayers recited every day after Mass for the success of the mission; the same should be done at the parochial school and at home. It is well to have printed notices, circulars, or cards with the order of exercises distributed at

Digitized by Google

the church door.* The first week of the mission should be exclusively devoted to the women; the last week to the men, who generally desire the women to set the example for piety and devotion. Besides, the women are the best advertisers of the mission. A pastoral visit to the houses of careless Catholics and even notorious sinners, with a special invitation for the mission, will not fail to produce a good impression on hardened hearts.

6. The mission itself is very troublesome to the pastor, but the good results to be hoped for will enable him to bear with every hardship and privation. He and his assistants should attend all the exercises to encourage the missionaries and edify the people. The local clergy should be on hand to prepare adults who have not yet made their First Communion, to instruct those who have forgotten everything about religion, and to take charge of converts who wish to join the Church. The rector should not hand over the entire care and management of his parish to the

* The following card may serve as a sample:

"Turn to the Lord your God."

A MISSION

FOR THE WOMEN OF THE CATHEDRAL PARISH

WILL OPEN ON

Sunday, April 15, and close on the following Sunday.

ORDER OF EXERCISES FOR THE WEEK.

MORNING.—5 o'clock, Mass and Instruction.
6 o'clock, Mass.
8 o'clock, Mass and Instruction.
EVENING.—7.30 o'clock, Rosary, Sermon, and Benediction.

Commencing on Tuesday, April 17, CONFESSIONS will be heard every day from 5 to 8 A.M., and from 3 to 6 and 7 to 10 P.M.

RELIGIOUS ARTICLES, such as Beads, Scapulars, Prayer-books, Images, Statues, etc., are sold in the basement.

N. B. A mission for the men of the parish will begin on Sunday evening, April 22.

"He that is just let him be justified still."

Digitized by Google

missionaries, nor should he permit them to command at his residence as they please. But he should provide for their bodily comfort, treat them as brothers, and make everything pleasant and cheerful for them. He should also abstain from interfering with the management of the mission itself. Though he ought to inform them of the peculiar vices and abuses of the place, yet he must not teach them what to preach, or how to remedy existing evils. They are supposed to know their own business. They also may have particular customs and traditions for conducting the mission, which should not be criticised. Give them no directions about granting or refusing absolution. Do not advise them against hearing general confessions. It is true that some people may be entirely upset by a general confession at a mission, or become more scrupulous and confused through it. But sensible missionaries are aware of this, and understand their duty. A celebrated Dominican missionary writes: "Knowing that during a mission there is a tendency on the part of many to worry about past confessions, we seek to allay unnecessary anxiety; and therefore, as a rule, we do not encourage general confessions. We take it for granted that the local clergy know and do their duty in the confessional, and that therefore there is usually no occasion for a general confession. On this matter a few questions pointedly put satisfy us as to the necessity or advantage or undesirableness of a general confession in any given case" (*American Ecclesiastical Review*, l. c.).

7. On the first Sunday after the mission the priest should congratulate the people for their assiduous attendance at the mission, and express his delight in knowing them now to be friends of God. He should exhort them to persevere in the state of grace, and warn them against relapsing into their former sins and evil habits: *Et fiunt novissima hominis illius pejora prioribus* (Luke xi. 26). At the

Digitized by Google

same time he should hold out the promise of forgiveness to those who would have the misfortune of falling again, as the mercy of the Lord is limitless. He should encourage all to frequent the sacraments at least every three months, and insist that the members of the various societies which have been established or strengthened during the mission receive holy communion at the appointed time. Invite them all to daily visits of the Blessed Sacrament, and have an abundance of pious practices, which will nourish their devotion and keep them from spiritual starvation.

§ 50.

Nuns.

1. A NUN is a woman devoted to a religious life under a vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience to a superior of an Order or community approved by the Church. She is one whom God has called to higher perfection and closer union with Himself, whom the heavenly Bridegroom invited by the words of the Psalmist: *Audi, filia, et vide, et inclina aurem tuam, et obliviscere populum tuum, et domum patris tui: et concupiscet Rex decorem tuum* (Ps. xliv. 11). She has heeded the invitation: she has left father and mother, home, and all that gives charm to life; she has renounced her very name, and is dead to the world and living for Him alone "whom her soul loveth." Her presence and example are a protection to the innocent maiden and a constant rebuke to the wayward and sensuous. Her words bring comfort to the weary, and her smile is like a benediction to the poor and suffering. Such is the Catholic *nun* or *sister*, as we call her simply and reverently. To the saintly lives of our nuns, to their indefatigable labors in the schoolroom and in the sick-ward, is due in no small degree the wonderful development of the

Digitized by Google

Church in the United States. The Fathers of the Second Baltimore Council express their fervent thanks to God for the number and variety of religious Orders, and sincere gratitude to our noble sisters for their holy work among us. *Sanctimonialium, sive feminarum religiosarum, hujus regionis praeclara in Christianam Rempublicam merita spectantes, non possumus quin agamus Omnipotenti Deo gratias; qui harum tam utilium Congregationum tantum numerum, tantamque varietatem in Ecclesiae subsidium excitaverit. Hisce quippe Congregationibus acceptum referimus, quod tot puellarum innocentiae servandae habeamus parata tutaque domicilia; his debet America nostra institutionem numerosae juventutis tum in literis, tum in Christianis moribus, atque adeo diffundendae Catholicae Fidei efficax adjumentum.... Quis enim, etiam Acatholicus, Sororum nostrarum in Nosocomiis inexhaustam patientiam, parem in omnes beneficentiam, singularem ubique modestiam, potuit non admirari; aut tantarum virtutum effecatricem causam aliam cogitare, quam divini Spiritus adjutorium illud, quo etiam inimicus homo cogatur fateri, "Digitus Dei est hic!"* (No. 415.)

2. Always show a sincere respect for the *consecrated virgins* of the Church.* The priest who looks upon them merely as troublesome women, as a necessary evil in the parish, has lost sight of the supernatural in them, and fails in one of his important pastoral duties, which obliges him to care first for those who are nearest and dearest to God. If he is to be a father to all under his charge, he should,

* The beautiful words of St. Cyprian, which we read in the fourth lesson, *De Communi Virginum*, ii., *loco*, breathe the spirit of reverence and affection of the Church for her consecrated virgins: *Nunc nobis ad virgines sermo est, quarum quo sublimior gloria est, major et cura est. Flos est ille Ecclesiastici germinis, decus atque ornamentum gratiae spiritualis, laeta indoles, laudis et honoris opus integrum . . . illustrior portio gregis Christi. Gaudet per illas, atque in illis largiter floret Ecclesiae matris gloriosa fecunditas. . . . Has adhortamur affectione potius quam potestate.*

Digitized by Google

above all, be a kind father to the nuns who reside within his jurisdiction, whether they are engaged in parish work or not. Though avoiding every familiarity and worldly intercourse, yet he should gain and retain the esteem and confidence of the good sisters, and in return afford them every spiritual consolation they need and every facility to carry on the work of their Order. To be deprived of a Mass or holy communion is a great privation for true religious. See that they have Mass and Benediction at the appointed hour, and do not keep them on their knees in the chapel waiting for your convenience. Do not interfere with the management of the convent; leave it to the superior. See, however, that they have the necessaries of life, and that they do not suffer in school or convent for want of fresh air and light. Never quarrel with them. Never show yourself displeased with them. If anything is to be corrected, do it in so quiet and friendly a way as to make them feel your good intention for their own welfare. Have no preference for any member, but treat them all alike as sisters.

3. In order to show practically their grateful appreciation for the services rendered by those sisters to the Church, the Fathers of the Second and Third Baltimore Councils took care that they be well provided with excellent confessors and directors. The Third Council repeated and emphasized the Second when it decreed: *Ad munus hoc arduum et momentosum eligantur viri maturioris aetatis, docti ac pii, qui sanctitatis propriae studiosi, ad orationem et contemplationem sanctam poenitentes suas efforment; maxime allaborent ad conservandum in monasteriis spiritum vitae perfectioris et strictam regularum observantiam; nihil in iis, neque in laudabilibus consuetudinibus, Episcopo inconsulto, innovantes iisque se conformantes specialiter quoad frequentiam sacrae communionis* (No. 98). If the bishop appoints you confes-

Digitized by Google

sor to a religious community, convince yourself thoroughly of the grave responsibility which this duty imposes on you. Do not say, "Nuns are like other people; all I can do is to give them a penance and absolution." They are not like other people; if they were, the Church would not select special confessors for them. Besides a sound knowledge of moral and ascetic theology, you should practise mental prayer more frequently, exercise yourself in works of mortification, study Christian perfection, and seek the necessary light and support from God.

4. A confessor of sisters must carefully study the rules and constitutions of the Order to which they belong, familiarize himself with its aims and workings, and equip himself as a safe guide and counsellor in all matters relating to a truly religious life. He must lead them on the way of perfection to which the nuns by their profession are bound to aspire. This perfection does not consist in the performance of extraordinary works of penance and piety, but in divine charity. *Perfectio habetur, in quantum excluditur ab affectu hominis non solum illud, quod est caritati contrarium, sed etiam omne illud, quod impedit, ne affectus mentis totaliter dirigatur ad Deum.* (St. Thom. 2, ii. qu. 184, a. 2). He should insist on a scrupulous observance of their religious vows, of the daily order of exercises, of the daily recitation of the Office, of silence which conduces so much to spiritual life, and on the practice of mental prayer. The right of settling how often the nuns should approach holy communion belongs exclusively to the confessor. He ought to support and strengthen the authority of the local and general superiors, and defend them against complaints on the part of sisters as long as he can conscientiously do so. It is essential to the preservation of peace and order in a religious community that the confessor and superior be in full accord and work together in harmony for the spiritual progress of

Digitized by Google

all. He should not tolerate unnecessary intercourse of the sisters with seculars; such intercourse tends to cool their religious fervor and love for their state, and to fill their minds with ideas and maxims of the world which they have solemnly renounced. Make them cherish the spirit of enclosure, and do not allow them to leave it except when their rules allow them to do so. *Ad eliminandos vel praecavendos abusus qui in domibus sororum ex commercio cum extraneis facile nascuntur, jubemus ut stricte servent eam solitudinem, quae eis propriis regulis vel constitutionibus est praescripta, ita ut ob suam clausuram passivam neminem, citra ordinationem regulae vel Ordinarii licentiam, claustrum suum ingredi vel in eo morari permittant. Etenim "maxime interest ut virgines Deo mancipatae ab omni mundano consortio separatae vivant," ideoque "proprius earum Episcopus jure meritoque poterit hanc ipsam clausurae legem injungere"* (Conc. Balt. III. 94).

5. Formerly, in many religious congregations and institutes the approved rules permitted, and even suggested, that the members give an account of conscience to their superiors, and left the latter certain rights and privileges in regard to their subjects to grant and withhold holy communion. Such rules often led to worry of conscience and disturbance of external peace. On December 14, 1890, Pope Leo XIII., through the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, made the following wholesome and wise regulations which will greatly contribute to the order and concord in convents, give more liberty of conscience to religious, and facilitate the work of confessors and directors:

"(*a*) His Holiness annuls, abrogates, and declares, henceforth, void all provisions whatever in the constitutions of pious societies and institutes of women, whether with simple or solemn vows, as well as of mere laymen,

Digitized by Google

though said constitutions bear the approbation of the Holy See in any form, even that which is termed most special, in all that concerns the intimate manifestations of heart or conscience under any form or name. Hence it is strictly enjoined upon all superiors and superioresses of such institutes, congregations, and societies to cancel and utterly expunge from their respective constitutions, directories, and manuals the aforesaid provisions. He annuls also and abolishes all usages or customs, even immemorial ones, pertaining thereunto.

"(*b*) Moreover, he positively forbids said superiors and superioresses, of any grade or prominence whatever, to strive to induce the persons subject to them, directly or indirectly, by command, counsel, fear, threats, or flattery, to make any such manifestation of conscience to them. On the other hand, he enjoins upon the subjects to denounce to the higher superiors the lower ones who shall presume to induce them to do it; and if there be question of the superior- or superioress-general, such denunciation must be made by the subjects to this Holy Congregation.

"(*c*) This, however, in no wise inhibits subjects from opening their minds freely and of their own accord to their superiors, in order that from their prudence, in doubts and anxieties, counsel and guidance for the acquirement of virtue and progress towards perfection may be received.

"(*d*) Moreover, whilst maintaining in full force whatever was prescribed by the Holy Council of Trent in relation to the ordinary and extraordinary confessors of communities, as well as what was established by Benedict XIV., of holy memory, in the Constitution *Pastoralis Curae*, His Holiness admonishes superiors of all ranks against refusing an extraordinary confessor to their subjects as often as the subjects shall feel bound to ask for one for the relief of their souls, without the superiors inquiring in any manner their reason for so doing or showing any displeasure at it.

Digitized by Google

And, in order that so judicious a provision shall not be futile, he exhorts the ordinaries to appoint worthy priests, with proper faculties, to whom the communities of women in their several dioceses may have easy recourse in the Sacrament of Penance.

"(*e*) As to the granting or prohibiting of holy communion, His Holiness decrees that such permission or prohibition shall pertain exclusively to the ordinary and extraordinary confessor, without the superior having any authority to meddle therein, except in the case where some subject, between his last and the next ensuing sacramental confession, shall have become a scandal to the community or shall have committed some external fault of a serious nature.

"(*f*) Hence all are warned to prepare themselves sedulously for holy communion and to receive it on the days fixed by their rule: when, however, the confessor shall judge it expedient for any one to receive more frequently, by reason of fervor or spiritual progress, he shall have authority to permit it. In such cases whoever shall receive the privilege of more frequent or even daily communion must apprise the superior of it; and if the superior thinks that he has just and grave reasons for objecting to more frequent communions of this kind, he is bound to manifest them to the confessor, by whose judgment he must abide absolutely.

"(*g*) His Holiness also commands each and every superior, general, provincial, and local of the aforesaid institutes, whether of men or women, to observe studiously and accurately the provisions of this decree, under the penalties *ipso facto* incurred by all superiors who violate the mandates of the Apostolic See.

"(*h*) Finally, he orders copies of this present decree, translated into the vernacular, to be inserted in the constitutions of the aforesaid pious institutes, and that once a

Digitized by Google

year, at a fixed time, in each house, it be read in a clear and intelligible voice, either in the community refectory or in a chapter specially convened for this purpose.

"And so His Holiness enacts and decrees, all things to the contrary notwithstanding, even though entitled to special or individual naming."

§ 51.

Catholic Schools.

1. The highest principle of all education is given in the words of Christ: *Quaerite primum regnum Dei, et justitiam ejus: et haec omnia adjicientur vobis* (Matt. vi. 33). Man is not for this life, like the beast that perishes: he has an immortal destiny, and this world is only the means to the end. He must consequently shape all his actions for the heavenly and everlasting kingdom of God. He must use the perishable and transitory things of earth to insure his eternal happiness. Religion must enter his daily life and be the nerve and motive of his thoughts and deeds. He cannot divorce religion from anything which tends to cultivate his mind or ennoble his heart. Without religion, development of character is impossible. Education is essentially religious. Instruction is possible without religion, but education cannot be imparted without religion.

2. Education is of a spiritual order. Education belongs to the Church which the Son of God established as the teacher of mankind when He commissioned His apostles: *Euntes docete omnes gentes* (Matt. xxviii. 19). Through this commission the Catholic Church claims to be *mater et magistra cunctorum hominum.* She claims the right of education for her children. She insists on the necessity of a Catholic education, and she condemns, and must ever condemn, every system of education which excludes religion from the school. She solemnly maintains that a merely

Digitized by Google

secular education cannot give a child the necessary means to know and attain its sublime destiny. *Ecclesia, cujus haec potissimum est missio super terram, ut singulos homines, in baptismate Christo renatos, jam a primo rationis usu in viis veritatis et justitiae ad finem supernaturalem adducat, nequaquam sinere potest, ut parentes Catholici quorum tum jus tum officium naturale et divinum est Christianiae filiorum suorum educationi consulere, educationem mere saecularem ipsis procurent, quippe quae eis media ad ultimum finem suum cognoscendum et assequendum necessaria suppeditare minime possit* (Conc. Balt. III. 194).

3. The three Plenary Councils of Baltimore have condemned the *public schools* as insufficient for Catholic children and as really dangerous to their faith and morals. Public-school education is pointed out as one of the principal causes why many have lost the Catholic faith in America. *Clarissimis autem tam hostium quam domesticorum fidei testimoniis docemur numerum eorum, qui ob hanc inter alias principalem causam, quod educatione mere saeculari instituti fuerint, ab Ecclesia defecerunt, tam ingentem esse, ut inimicis quidem gaudendi, nobis autem dolendi locum ac rationem nimis abundanter praebeat* (Conc. Balt. III. 195). The American prelates consider the Catholic parish school as the *best* and *only* remedy against the spreading pest of religious indifferentism; they command the establishment of a Catholic school near every parish church, and threaten priests who are remiss in this matter with censure; they oblige Catholic parents to send their children to no other but a Catholic school, wherever such a school exists. Without a Catholic school very little can be done for the spiritual welfare of the rising generation. "We do not say that, even if trained in Catholic schools, all will turn out to be good practical Catholics and virtuous members of society; for the Church does not take away free-will, nor eradicate

Digitized by Google

all the evil propensities of the flesh; but it is certain that they cannot be made such in schools in which the religion of their parents is reviled as a besotted superstition, and the very text-books of history and geography are made to protest against it; or in which they are accustomed to hear the priests spoken of without reverence, Protestant nations lauded as the only free and enlightened nations of the earth, Catholic nations sneered at as ignorant and enslaved, and the Church denounced as a spiritual despotism full of craft and encrusted all over with corruption both of faith and morals" (Brownson, *Complete Works*, xiii. p. 258).

4. A Catholic school is not merely an integral, but an essential, part of a parish. After the Church, it is the most important place; it is the conservatory of faith and morals; the training-ground of the future champions of religion. To make our Catholic schools efficient and capable of meeting the wants of the hour, the Third Baltimore Council prescribes the following means: *Sacerdotes vero in cura animarum saepe saepius de gravissimo suo erga scholas officio in coloquiis et collationibus cum fratribus consilia conferant. Scholas suas sicut pupillas oculorum suorum diligant, eas frequenter, unamquamque partem earum semel saltem in hebdomade invisant et inspiciant, puerorum moribus invigilent, zelum eorum congruis mediis stimulent, catechismum et historiam sacram ipsi per se doceant, aut certe ut a magistris sodalibus congregationum rite doceatur, efficiant; ceteris studiis autem attentos oculos advertant, examinationibus publicis semel vel etiam bis in anno scholas suas notitiae fidelium subjiciant ac favori commendent. Operam dent ut in scholis adhibeantur semper libri a Catholicis scriptoribus concinnati. Sanctis motivis ducti haec omnia curent, insuper scientes non fore, ut ad rectoratum inamovibilem vel aliud munus promoveantur, si partes suas erga scholas adimplere neglexerint* (No. 201).

Digitized by Google

5. In their Pastoral Letter the Fathers of the same Council lay special stress on the necessity of Catholic education. "Popular education has always been the chief object of the Church's care; in fact it is not too much to say that the history of the Church's work is the history of civilization and education. In the rude ages, when semi-barbarous chieftains boasted of their illiteracy, she succeeded in diffusing that love of learning which covered Europe with schools and universities; and thus from the barbarous tribes of the early middle ages, she built up the civilized nations of modern times. Even subsequent to the religious dissensions of the sixteenth century, whatever progress has been made in education is mainly due to the impetus which she had previously given. In our own country, notwithstanding the many difficulties attendant on first beginnings and unexampled growth, we already find her schools, academies, and colleges everywhere, built and sustained by voluntary contributions, even at the cost of great sacrifices, and comparing favorably with the best educational institutions in the land for completeness of equipment and thoroughness of training.

6. "These facts abundantly attest the Church's desire for popular instruction. The beauty of truth, the refining and elevating influences of knowledge, are meant for all, and she wishes them to be brought within the reach of all. Knowledge enlarges our capacity both for self-improvement and for promoting the welfare of our fellow-men; and in so noble a work the Church wishes every hand to be busy. Knowledge, too, is the best weapon against pernicious errors. It is only 'a little learning' that is 'a dangerous thing.' In days like ours, when error is so pretentious and aggressive, every one needs to be as completely armed as possible with sound knowledge—not only the clergy, but also the people, that they may be able to withstand the noxious influences of popularized irreligion. In the great

Digitized by Google

coming combat between truth and error, between Faith and Agnosticism, an important part of the fray must be borne by the laity, and woe to them if they are not well prepared. And if, in the olden days of vassalage and serfdom, the Church honored every individual, no matter how humble his position, and labored to give him the enlightenment that would qualify him for higher responsibilities, much more now, in the era of popular rights and liberties, when every individual is an active and influential factor in the body politic, does she desire that all should be fitted by suitable training for an intelligent and conscientious discharge of the important duties that may devolve upon them.

7. "Few, if any, will deny that a sound civilization must depend upon sound popular education. But education, in order to be sound and to produce beneficial results, must develop what is best in man, and make him not only clever, but good. A one-sided education will develop a one-sided life; and such a life will surely topple over, and so will every social system that is built up of such lives. True civilization requires that not only the physical and intellectual, but also the moral and religious well-being of the people should be improved, and at least with equal care. Take away religion from a people, and morality will soon follow; morality gone, even their physical condition will ere long degenerate into the corruption which breeds decrepitude, while their intellectual attainments would only serve as a light to guide them to deeper depths of vice and ruin. This has been so often demonstrated in the history of the past, and is in fact so self-evident, that one is amazed to find any difference of opinion about it. A civilization without religion would be a civilization of "the struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest," in which cunning and strength would become the substitutes for principle, virtue, conscience, and duty. As a matter of fact, there never has been a civilization worthy of the

Digitized by Google

name without religion; and from the facts of history the laws of human nature can easily be inferred.

8. "Hence education, in order to foster civilization, must foster religion. Now the three great educational agencies are the home, the Church, and the school. These mould men and shape society. Therefore each of them, to do its part well, must foster religion. But many, unfortunately, while avowing that religion should be the light and the atmosphere of the home and of the Church, are content to see it excluded from the school, and even advocate as the best school system that which necessarily excludes religion. Few surely will deny that childhood and youth are the periods of life when the character ought especially to be subjected to religious influences. Nor can we ignore the palpable fact that the school is an important factor in the forming of childhood and youth—so important that its influence, when not harmonizing with the influences of home and Church, is often found to outweigh and neutralize them both. It cannot, therefore, be desirable or advantageous that religion should be excluded from the school. On the contrary, it ought to be there one of the chief agencies for moulding the young life to all that is true and virtuous and holy. To shut religion out of the school and keep it for home and the Church is, logically, to train up a generation that will consider religion good for home and the Church, but not for the practical business of real life. But a more false and pernicious notion could not be imagined. Religion, in order to elevate a people, should inspire their whole life and rule their relations with one another. A life is not dwarfed but ennobled by being lived in the presence of God. Therefore the school, which principally gives the knowledge fitting for practical life, ought to be pre-eminently under the holy influence of religion. From the shelter of home and school the youth must soon go out into the busy ways of trade or traffic or professional

Digitized by Google

practice. In all these the principles of religion should animate and direct him. But he cannot expect to learn these principles in the workshop or office or the counting-room. Therefore let him be well and thoroughly imbued with them by the joint influences of home and school before he is launched out on the dangerous sea of life.

9. "All denominations of Christians are now awakening to this great truth, which the Catholic Church has never ceased to maintain. Reason and experience are forcing them to recognize that the only practical way to secure a Christian people is to give the youth a Christian education. The avowed enemies of Christianity in some European countries are banishing religion from the schools in order to eliminate it gradually from among the people. In this they are logical, and we may well profit by the lesson. Hence the cry for Christian education is going up from all religious bodies throughout the land. And this is no narrowness nor 'sectarianism' on their part; it is an honest and logical endeavor to preserve Christian truth and morality among the people by fostering religion in the young. Nor is it any antagonism to the State; on the contrary, it is an honest endeavor to give to the State better citizens, by making them better Christians. The friends of Christian education do not condemn the State for not imparting religious instruction in the public schools as they are now organized, because they well know it does not lie within the province of the State to teach religion. They simply follow their conscience by sending their children to denominational schools, where religion can have its rightful place and influence.

10. "Two objects therefore, dear brethren, we have in view, viz., to multiply our schools, and to perfect them. We must multiply them till every Catholic child in the land shall have the means of education within its reach. There is still much to be done ere this is attained. There

Digitized by Google

are still hundreds of Catholic children in the United States deprived of the benefit of a Catholic school. Pastors and parents should not rest till this defect be remedied. No parish is complete till it has schools adequate to the needs of its children, and the pastor and people of such a parish should feel that they have not accomplished their entire duty until the want is supplied.

11. "But then we must also perfect our schools. We repudiate the idea that the Catholic school need be in any respect inferior to any other school whatsoever. And if hitherto in some places our people have acted on the principle that it is better to have an imperfect Catholic school than to have none at all, let them now push their praiseworthy ambition still further, and not relax their efforts till their schools be elevated to the highest educational excellence. And we implore parents not to hasten to take their children from school, but to give them all the time and all the advantages that they have the capacity to profit by, so that in after life their children may 'rise up and call them blessed.'"

§ 52.

Church Music.

1. In all ages and among all nations music has been considered as a divine thing, and has been used as the most effective means to manifest the devout emotions of the human soul in worshipping the great Creator. Pagan philosophers taught that man is led to God, and his mind is imbued with the divinity, by the sound of music and sacred song. It was the Church of Christ, however, that fully understood the power and charm of music on the heart and cultivated it as a God-given art. "Nothing," St. Chrysostom says, "so exalts the mind and gives it, as it

Digitized by Google

were, wings, so delivers it from the earth and loosens it from the bonds of the body, so inspires it with the love of wisdom and fills it with such disdain for the things of this life, as the melody and sweetness of holy song" (*Hom. in Ps.* xli. 1). Church music is coeval with the Church herself. Through her music was employed in the service of God, and became the handmaid of religion. *In sacrorum rituum celebratione et praesertim in sacrificii missae oblatione solemni, Ecclesia ab aetate Apostolica usque ad nos usa est modulatione musica ut affectus hominum melius provocaret in Deum, et magnificentius Deum coleret* (Conc. Balt. III. 114).

2. Christ in the Blessed Eucharist is the incentive of Catholic song. The hymn of the Church was intoned by Our Lord in the *coenaculum*, where He celebrated the first Pontifical High Mass: this hymn, the noblest expression of a grateful Christian heart, was caught up and sustained by the Church in every century; it shall be hushed when the world crumbles into dust, and then only to be taken up by celestial choirs and to be continued by them forever. In the early days of the Church her music was simple, but soothing and invigorating, strengthening the confessor and cheering the martyr. The catacombs resounded with the subdued voices of those primitive Christians who, according to apostolic ordinance, worshipped God "in psalms and hymns and spiritual canticles" (Eph. v. 19). Pliny, in a letter to the Emperor Trajan, mentions Christians as a class of people who "meet on a certain day before daylight, singing by turns a hymn to Christ as to God." As time went on, the music of the Church received the highest and most careful cultivation by holy and learned men, such as SS. Cyprian, Athanasius, Ambrose, Augustine, Pope Damasus, and, above all, Pope Gregory the Great, until it reached such a high degree of perfection that it never since has been

Digitized by Google

surpassed by any composer. This sublime music, commonly called Gregorian or Plain Chant, and in which we easily recognize the work of the Holy Ghost, is the true music of the Church.

3. Church music, consequently, is that which is composed and executed according to the given rules and sentiments of the Church. Thus far the Church has approved only two kinds of music for divine service: *simple* and *harmonized* Gregorian, or *plain* and *figured* music. To the plain Gregorian the Church clings with unchanging affection. And surely Gregorian is the queen of all Church music; it is the Church praying in her sublime, chaste, and measured melodies. This ancient chant is the most genuine expression of religious feeling, and bears a stamp of unequalled grandeur and solemnity. "It is my opinion," says Dr. Witt, the modern Palestrina, "that Gregorian music is, in its way, as perfect a masterpiece as a symphony of Beethoven and the *Don Giovanni* of Mozart in their way, and that the *Missa Papae Marcelli*, composed in 1565, is just as precious and imperishable as the *Freischütz* von Weber." The second kind of Church music is the harmonized Gregorian of the Palestrina style. To this class is referred all the religious music, not only of Pierluigi da Palestrina, "the prince of Church music," but all polyphonic music written in the spirit and imitation of the great master. This style of music possesses the qualities required by the *Ceremoniale Episcoporum:* it is *devota, distincta et intelligibilis.* It does not mutilate the words of the sacred text nor repeat them too frequently; it leaves the text in its integrity, neither adding anything to it nor taking from it. How are we to find out whether a piece of music is of the approved kind or not? For the United States the answer is easy. We have a special society for Church music, approved by Pius IX. under the name of "The American St. Cecilia Society," which has

Digitized by Google

a catalogue containing over one thousand numbers of Masses and liturgical pieces, classed among the music of the Palestrina School.*

4. Not all that is praised or advertised as Church music deserves this title. One of our great Catholic journalists, the late James A. McMaster, is quoted as saying: "Much of our so-called Church music is, indeed, devil's music." In place of the melodies of saints, our churches and chapels occasionally resound with the giddy, sensuous, and even blasphemous airs of the opera and the stage; with music composed by impious men who knew not the things of God. It is the imperative duty of the priest to banish from the house of the Lord anything which savors of levity or lasciviousness. *Praecepta itaque ac monita Patrum atque Summorum Pontificum attendentes, et decretum Plenarii Concilii Baltimorensis II. renovantes, monemus pastores omnes ut sedulo invigilent ad eliminandos abusus qui in musica aut cantu in ecclesiis suis irrepere potuerunt* (Conc. Balt. III. 117). Arias, duets, and trios are forbidden. All the Masses of Beethoven (with the exception of his Mass in C), those of Mozart (excepting the eighth and ninth in F and D), Haydn, Mercadante, and many others, are either profane and worldly, or at least not liturgical, and should never be sung in a Catholic church. Moreover, if you except the organ, no orchestral or instrumental music is allowed *nisi de consensu Episcopi.*

5. The selection of proper Church music is a pastoral duty, as the Fathers of the Third Baltimore Council advert in No. 117. According to this decree, the priest should look upon himself as chief director of the choir or as the real choir-master. He, and not the organist, is responsi-

* Heretofore the worthy president, Prof. I. Singenberger, of Milwaukee, has been found only too willing to furnish all possible assistance to every priest addressing him for information.

Digitized by Google

ble for the success or the failure of the Church choir. To organize and to keep up a good choir is one of the most trying pastoral difficulties that the priest meets with in the discharge of his office. And yet with patience and prudence he will succeed in turning to the glory of God and the edification of the faithful what otherwise would be a source of constant annoyance and scandal. Let it be one of your first works in taking charge of a mission or parish to build up, where it exists not, an efficient choir of volunteer singers for High Mass and Vespers. And though the Apostle counsels "*mulieres in Ecclesia taceant*," yet in America it would be exceedingly difficult to have a good choir without female singers. Do not allow your organist to buy the music without your knowledge. Visit all rehearsals, but only for a few minutes and to make a few pleasant, instructive, and grateful remarks. Let all rehearsals begin and close with a short prayer. Be kind and reserved to every member of the choir, and respectful to its director. See that all who sing practise their religion. In a large parish the members of the choir may be formed into a Church society for the cultivation and promotion of ecclesiastical music, with stated times for holy communion and the celebration of a patronal feast, on which they should be hospitably entertained by the pastor. In missions where musical talent is rare and a respectable choir an impossibility, High Mass should not be attempted: a Low Mass is preferable to a High Mass with a musical burlesque. See that the children are daily taught singing and the reading of music, and have them frequently sing at Benediction and during Low Mass. Have singing at the meeting of the various church societies, and gradually prepare the way for congregational singing. Let the end of all music in church be an increase of devotion in those who sing and in those who listen, rendering their affections more pure and holy. *Cantantibus organis, Caecilia*

Digitized by Google

Domino decantabat, dicens: Fiat cor meum immaculatum, ut non confundar.

§ 53.

Building.

1. We are in the building period of the Church in America. Almost every priest on the mission will find himself in the situation to build a church, school, or rectory, to provide the church with altars, statues, stations, to decorate its walls, and embellish the surroundings of church property. It is absolutely required of him that he possess the rudiments of ecclesiastical architecture and the principles and history of Christian art. He should know the different styles of architecture, and be able to distinguish between what is correct and what is to be rejected. If he has not learned these things during his collegiate or seminary course, he should procure a handbook that will give him the necessary information,* and consult the pertinent articles in a good dictionary or encyclopædia.

2. The selection of a proper site is of paramount importance. For a church, the place should be convenient to the people, and, if possible, in the centre of the parish and somewhat elevated, according to Catholic tradition. Do not show any undue haste in buying the land; find out first the real value of the property. Purchase, if you can, several adjoining lots so as to have enough ground for enlarging the church, building a rectory and school. How many sighs have escaped the lips of priests disappointed and regretful for not having bought plenty of land around

* To those who understand *German* we highly recommend: *Die Kunst im Dienste der Kirche, von* G. Jakob, Landshut. Somebody would render a great service to English-speaking priests by giving a good translation of this excellent and eminently practical work.

Digitized by Google

the church when they could have done so at a low price! Do not take up a collection or open a subscription-list for the purpose of buying the lot. You should be entirely free in selecting a proper site, and thus avoid a number of difficulties in deeding the property to the bishop or the church corporation. If you have no money in the treasury, then get it from the bishop or some reliable person, and only after having secured the property, inform the people and call upon their generosity to refund the money. Should you buy the lot in your own personal name, you are not obliged to deed it over to the bishop or church corporation; but no bishop will give you permission to build on it until it has become ecclesiastical property, and such property cannot be retained in the priest's own personal name.

3. Before paying for the land, see that you get a clear title to the same. The deed should be executed by a capable lawyer, and afterwards recorded in the city or town hall, in the county court-house, or wherever the records of deeds are officially kept. This matter of deeds is so important that the Third Baltimore Council passed a special decree on it. *Rectores summam adhibere debent curam in obtinendis proprietatum ecclesiasticarum titulis* (deeds). *Postquam a viris peritis diligentissime recogniti fuerint, eos Episcopo probandos exhibeant, ut demum formis et cautelis tum a lege civili tum dioecesana requisitis vestiti in archivo dioecesano deponantur* (No. 282). If there be no regular church corporation and all the property of the diocese is held in the bishop's name, the deed is to be made out in the bishop's own Christian and family name, without adding his title: James Gibbons, Michael Augustine Corrigan.

4. You must know your resources before you make arrangements about a new building. *Quis ex vobis volens turrim aedificare, non prius sedens computat sumptus, qui*

Digitized by Google

necessarii sunt, si habeat ad perficiendum, ne, posteaquam posuerit fundamentum, et non potuerit perficere, omnes qui vident incipiant illudere ei, dicentes: Quia hic homo coepit aedificare, et non potuit consummare? (Luke xiv. 28–30.) Do not be deceived by promises and subscriptions. People often promise when they are excited by a fervent appeal of the priest, and they subscribe more than they can afford to give. Many will fail to contribute the promised amount, because they change their mind or circumstances change. Some promise in order to please the priest or rather to avoid his displeasure. It will not do to offer promissory notes in payment to architect or contractor, as i has been tried in a few instances to the great annoyance of the priest. Give a good example, when you open the subscription-list, by heading the same with your generous subscription. Do not subscribe the full amount you intend to give to the building; mention a part of it, or state that you will give so much every year for three or five years. You ought not, however, figure too closely on your probable resources in the congregation, but leave a margin for the Lord to fill up. It is better to want in human prudence than in confidence in Divine Providence. "In what concerns God's service, those who desire to be too prudent rarely perform what is grand and heroic. He will never undertake anything remarkable who is alarmed at the slightest difficulties and who calculates scrupulously with anxious solicitude the various chances as to his undertaking. For this reason the Wise Man advises us to set limits to our prudence. It is not fitting that the virtue which ought to rule and moderate the others should be itself wanting in rule and moderation" (*The Spirit of St. Ignatius*, ix. 4). Place your building fund under the special protection of St. Joseph, the great financier of the Catholic Church; he will not forsake you as long as you zealously work with single heart for God's glory. *Consti-*

Digitized by Google

tuit eum dominum domus suae, et principem omnis possessionis suae (Ps. civ. 21).

5. The next important step in the process of building is to secure the services of an experienced and competent ecclesiastical architect. This is no easy task, because a competent ecclesiastical architect is an *avis rarissima* in America. There are plenty of excellent builders, but exceedingly few thorough church architects. Do not accept the plans which a mason, carpenter, or a clerical amateur architect may offer you, but get the best architect within reach; what you pay to him is money well spent, and, frequently, money saved by him. Inform him of your intention as to the style, size, and cost of the new building. If you are building a new church of some pretension, let it be the expression of the Catholic dogma. The structure should be cruciform; for the fundamental idea of Catholic architecture is the sacrifice on Calvary, daily repeated in our churches in the holy sacrifice of the Mass. The edifice should face, with its apse, the east, whence the true Light arose, *illuminare his qui in tenebris et in umbra mortis sedent;* it should be divided into sanctuary and nave, to express the distinction between the *corpus Christi verum* and the *corpus Christi mysticum.* A high basement is of especially practical value for the meetings of the Sunday-school and of the various church societies. See that the sacristy is not overlooked; it should be large and dry (south-east), have plenty of light, and be provided with solid vestment presses. Everything in and about the church should be arranged in a bright, cheerful, and artistic manner, with the Catholic idea of church architecture predominating. When the architect has drawn the plans, make a careful study of them; visit places where he has put up a similar building, and inquire of the priest if he gave entire satisfaction. The plans have to be submitted to the bishop for approval, which you ought not to do

Digitized by Google

until you can intelligently explain them, and satisfactorily answer the bishop's questions. *Si nova aliqua ecclesia sit erigenda, vel schola et domus presbyteralis, vel si hujusmodi aedificium notabiliter immutandum sit vel augendum, aut ruinosum diruendum, rectores tale opus non aggrediantur, priusquam Ordinarii licentiam scriptam obtinuerint* (Conc. Balt. III. 279). Should the bishop reject the whole project and refuse his approval for reasons which appear weak and futile to you, show no resentment, but reverently kiss his ring and depart with your plans to return with a courageous heart on some more propitious day. It may be the bishop's intention to try you to see if you possess the necessary qualifications for undertaking the work,—not only courage to begin, but perseverance to complete. Should the bishop, however, at your next audience give an emphatic and final refusal, a *negative et amplius*, then you may drop the project until it is the Lord's will to take it up again. But NEVER begin a new building until you actually possess the *written* permission of the bishop. You will not be blamed for it if things do not turn out as the bishop expected. It is even advisable for a priest not to build unless he has the *hearty* approval and cheerful support of the bishop, without whose blessing no diocesan undertaking will prosper. He should be heart and soul in the work with his priest, and sustain him during the trials of building.

6. The architect should furnish you at least three sets of plans and specifications. After due episcopal approval, invite respectable contractors or builders to figure and give estimates on the job. Publish in the newspapers that the plans are open for inspection to contractors at your residence; at least five good builders should hand in estimates. It is less troublesome, and cheaper at the end, to let out the whole job than parts of it. Do not bind yourself to any condition in awarding the contract. Let it be honest

Digitized by Google

dealing, worthy of a priest, without respect of persons or fear of man. Do not give it absolutely to the lowest bidder, but give it to the best contractor who gives you the lowest figures.

7. NEVER allow a contractor to depart in the least from the original plan unless absolutely necessary and with the written approval of the architect. Beware of the wiles of contractors! They are ever anxious to save money by cutting off items in the specifications, or to make money by *extras*. NEVER pay a contractor a single dollar until he presents a *written* order from the architect. Rather face the insults and imprecations of builder and workmen than bear the consequences of illegal payment. Do not take the note of a contractor. Never pay wages before the work is done; money would have lost its value. Before making a payment to the contractor, satisfy yourself that the materials, such as stone, brick, lumber, mortar, cement, etc., are paid for, and the wages of the workmen are paid up to date. See that the money you pay really pays for work done for *you*, and not for another, as it sometimes happens that contractors pay with such money for other jobs. People who work for a priest, though indirectly only, should not have occasion to say: I worked for the Catholic Church, but was cheated out of my earnings. Such an accusation, though false, can be prevented by the prudence and foresight of the priest. Be kind and courteous to all who work on the new building. Make no distinction between men of different nationality and religion. Many a solid convert has been made at the building of a Catholic church or school in America through contact and daily conversation with a zealous priest who never loses sight of the spiritual while engaged with the material. Never publicly scold or blame a workman for mistakes. If he really be incapable, or injurious to the general work,

Digitized by Google

privately tell the boss and ask him to drop him quietly at the end of the week.

8. As a rule, it is wiser and cheaper to have the contractor furnish all the materials for the building. Priests sometimes imagine they could get brick, stone, or lumber much cheaper and better than tradesmen. This is generally a sad delusion. Business men know the tricks of trade better than clerics. Stick to your profession, and keep a sharp eye on the quality of the material without becoming a trader. Keep your building accounts in good order. Mark down every cent you received and expended. Keep the receipts of everything you paid for. Throw light on the whole proceeding; allow your successors to learn *what* you did and *how* you did it. Be your own secretary, and act as treasurer of the building fund. Money is frequently a terrible temptation to laymen. We have sad examples of sacrilegious thefts. Deposit money collected for the church as soon as possible in a secure bank, never in your own name, but as treasurer of the church. Do not keep any considerable sum of church money in your house overnight if you can prevent it. *Edicimus ne quis rector aut quilibet sacerdos ecclesiae pecuniam in mensa numularia privato suo nomine depositam teneat, aut mensae libellum* (bank-book) *suae privatae personae inscribi permittat* (Conc. Balt. III. 280).

9. Insist that the building be insured from the start. The contractor should secure a so-called *builders' risk*, and be responsible for any damage. The Third Baltimore Council ordained that all church property be insured. *Propter semper imminens incendiorum periculum mandamus, ut omnia aedificia ecclesiastica contra damnum ex incendio oriundum, ab una vel pluribus societatibus fiducia publica merito gaudentibus, nomine corporationis vel Ordinarii tempestive assecurentur* (No. 283).

Digitized by Google

§ 54.

Societies.

1. Practical intelligence and prudent zeal are necessary requisites in the priest for the organization and maintenance of societies which are intended to keep Catholics united in active Christian faith and in the exercise of Christian charity. It is characteristic of our own times for men to band together in societies for the promotion of all sorts of purposes. "This tendency is the natural outgrowth of an age of popular rights and representative institutions. It is also in accordance with the spirit of the Church, whose aim, as indicated by her name Catholic, is to unite all mankind in brotherhood. It is consonant also with the spirit of Christ, who came to break down all walls of division, and to gather all in the one family of the same heavenly Father" (Pastoral Letter, Conc. Balt. III.).

2. The priest will admit this tendency and take advantage of it by organizing his entire congregation into various divisions and companies, with different methods and means, for one single aim and end, to make them "a chosen generation, a holy nation, a purchased people" (1 Peter ii. 9). A closer union between pastor and people will thus be effected, and the parish formed into one solid army for the defence of faith and virtue and for the checking of immorality. "If there ever was a time when merely negative goodness would not suffice, such assuredly is the age in which we live. This is pre-eminently an age of action, and what we need to-day is active virtue and energetic piety. Again and again has the voice of the Vicar of Christ been heard, giving approval and encouragement to many kinds of Catholic associations, not only as a safeguard against the allurements of dangerous societies, but also as a powerful means of accomplishing much of the good that

Digitized by Google

our times stand in need of. Not only should the pastors of the Church be hard at work in building up 'the spiritual house' (1 Peter ii. 5), 'the tabernacle of God with men' (Apoc. xxi., 3) 'but every hand among the people of God should share in the labor'" (Pastoral Letter, l. c.).

3. We have to distinguish between *societies of Catholics* and *Catholic societies*. The former are generally benevolent societies, established by Catholics and wholly composed of Catholics, for personal and private interest; while we understand by Catholic societies such as are organized solely for spiritual advantages, with no temporal benefits directly accruing to its members. There should be no association in a parish bearing the Catholic name in which the priest does not or cannot take personal interest. He should never assume an attitude of hostility towards a society of Catholics nor condemn it on account of disagreements and disputes among the members, unless it be a public scandal or nuisance, and then only after consulting the ordinary. A prudent priest will enter quietly into the workings of such a society and remedy or remove existing evils, especially by bearing patiently with human failings and insisting vigorously on the principles of justice and charity. As long as he succeeds in bringing the members to the sacraments, he should keep on friendly terms with them. Never denounce them in church, but correct their defects privately, and with gentleness and authority. Denunciations never cure; they only irritate and advertise.

4. All the various forms of Catholic beneficial societies and kindred associations of Catholic workingmen are a very important element in practical Catholicity. "It ought to be," the Fathers of the Third Baltimore Council say, "and we trust is everywhere their aim to encourage habits of industry, thrift, and sobriety; to guard the members against the dangerous attractions of condemned or suspicious organizations; and to secure the faithful practice of their

Digitized by Google

religious duties, on which their temporal as well as their eternal welfare so largely depends." They should never forget that their success and influence depend on their fidelity to the Catholic Church. "Let our associations," Leo XIII. says about workmen's associations, "look first and before all to God; let religious instruction have therein a foremost place, each one being carefully taught what is his duty to God, what to believe, what to hope for, and how to work out his salvation; and let all be warned and fortified with special solicitude against wrong opinions and false teaching. Let the workingman be urged and led to the worship of God, to the earnest practice of religion, and, among other things, to the sanctification of Sundays and festivals. Let him learn to reverence and love holy Church, the common mother of us all; and so to obey the precepts and to frequent the sacraments of the Church, those sacraments being means ordained by God for obtaining forgiveness of sin and for leading a holy life" (Encycl. "Condition of Labor").

5. The principal and most important society which claims the first care of pastoral direction is the YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY. *Pro juvenibus, quia majoribus periculis objiciuntur, majorem curam impendi volumus; proinde statuimus, ut in omni paroecia vel missione, ubi numerus eorum sufficiens invenitur, societates speciales pro ipsis a rectore instituantur et omni opera foveantur. Sine hujusmodi enim associationibus opus juventutis Catholicae servandae in scholis parochialibus inceptum, plerumque in irritum cedet, et nostri adolescentes, qui tanto studio jam inde ab infantia custoditi sunt, moribus et illecebris mundi seducti tandem in societatum vetitarum barathro absorpti perdentur. Honestis autem societatibus adscripti, dum bonum temporale prosequuntur, ad pietatem quoque excolendam a prudente pastore facile adduci poterunt* (Conc. Balt. III. 257). Our young men are exposed to the greatest

Digitized by Google

dangers and therefore need the most abundant helps. In every parish where it does not exist a society should be organized for the particular encouragement of young men. The aim of the Young Men's Society is to guard young Catholics against dangerous influences, and to supply them with the means of innocent amusement and mental culture. Do not wait until the young men come to your residence to ask your assistance for the formation of a club. Go out to meet them. Young men are generally shy of a priest, and dislike to call on him. Visit them personally at their homes, and talk to them in a cordial manner on subjects which are familiar to them. You may not interest an ordinary young American in conversation about the infallibility of the Pope, but you will have his ear and tongue on baseball and prize-fights. Let them know that you do not condemn innocent pleasure, and have no intention to make religion a burden to them, but that you love them and are anxious for their temporal prosperity as well as their eternal salvation. Their society requires more pastoral attention than any other association in the parish. Introduce the rules of the *Catholic Young Men's National Union*, and see that they are faithfully observed. They should go to holy communion in a body on the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Furnish them plenty of amusements and healthy exercises. They should have a gymnasium and a reading-room. In a city they should have a building adapted to their wants containing a good library and reading-room, gymnasium and billiard-room, a lecture-hall, parlors and class-rooms. This sounds expensive, but the energy of a zealous priest will find the means—as hundreds of priests have found them—to put the plan into execution. The generosity of grateful men who become thrifty and even wealthy through the influence of such a society will soon make returns to the parish. The priest should frequently meet the young men at their hall and each time

Digitized by Google

address them with a few instructive, dignified, and encouraging words. He should never engage personally in their amusements, not even in a game of billiards, though he may applaud their dexterity in the same. Dramatic entertainments, lectures, debates, and literary exercises will benefit them intellectually and keep up their interest in the society. Never attack them publicly for any misconduct, but often praise them in church for their good behavior, and point to them as to your "joy and glory" (Phil. iv. 1).

6. The Holy Name Society appears best suited for the entire male portion of the congregation.* Men, married and single, should be invited to join it. There is nothing to prevent fellows belonging to the Young Men's Society from being members of the Holy Name Society, as it is of a purely spiritual character, having neither temporal benefit nor amusements attached to it. The society should meet every Sunday evening at seven o'clock and close before eight. On an evening during the week the men would have to change their clothes, which many dislike to do after a hard day's work, whilst on Sunday they are dressed and ready. As the meeting is over before eight o'clock, their Sunday evening will be free for visiting. The meeting should be a real service, consisting of the recitation of Vespers in English by the members, followed by a well-prepared instruction on a course of subjects timely and specially interesting to men, closing with Benediction

* The various Church societies should be affiliated with the proper congregations and centres of these societies so as to share in their privileges, indulgences, and good works. But when it is impossible, on account of local circumstances, strictly to observe the rules of the society, it is better to sacrifice privileges and indulgences than the existence of the society. The day and hour for the meeting of the different societies can only be determined by the priest in charge of the parish or mission. We do not presume to lay down rules, but only offer practical suggestions which will aid in selecting the proper time of the meetings, after mature consideration of local convenience.

Digitized by Google

of the Blessed Sacrament. A little book for the Holy Name Society, containing the Vespers and Litany of the Holy Name, with a few rules, can be nicely gotten up at a cost of two cents. Each member should possess a copy and participate in the recitation. The hymn "Jesus, the very thought of Thee" should always be sung, the Magnificat be recited standing and the Litany kneeling. Twenty minutes will be the limit for the instruction. Benediction should be sung by the members. The officers of the society should not be elected, except in a place where you do not know the people. Appoint as president the most popular, respectable, and venerable man in the parish. For secretary take a bright young man who is capable of keeping the registers and of issuing letters of invitation to special celebrations. Select a willing middle-aged man to take up the collection at every meeting during the singing of the hymn. He keeps the money, hands you the offering for a monthly Mass for the society and for three Low Masses at the death of a member, and gives you a semi-annual financial statement, which you read at the meeting. No fees, no other collections or subscriptions, should be introduced; the men must be perfectly convinced that the society is exclusively for their spiritual good. Encourage them to go to holy communion every second Sunday of the month; insist that all the members approach the holy table in a body on the feast of the Holy Name in January. On all solemn occasions they should wear the badge or button of the society. Two or three processions, with banner and band, from some hall or public square to the church, or from the church through the parish and back, on the patronal feast and the anniversary of the establishment of the society, will put life into it and please not only the men, but their proud wives, mothers, and sisters. Give them an annual retreat during the week preceding the feast of the Holy Name. It is not necessary to have a regular priest conduct

Digitized by Google

this retreat; a zealous brother priest of the diocese, gifted with the power to move hearts, will do the same work and perhaps more effectively, being better acquainted with local needs. It is not prudent to oblige the men to attend the funerals of deceased members in a body, or to visit sick members, as it leads to difficulties and embarrassments, but always dwell in your funeral sermons on the fact that the deceased was a faithful member of the Holy Name Society.

7. The Altar Society should be established in every church where it does not exist. Men and women should be invited to become members, though the devout sex will surely preponderate. This society should provide you with vestments for the church and the means to keep the sanctuary in good condition. Have a list of all the members framed and hung up in the vestibule or some other place where people can easily see it. The evening of the first Friday of the month would be the proper time for holding the regular monthly meeting, consisting of the Rosary, instruction, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The instruction ought to be in close relation to the mystery of the Holy Eucharist, the ceremonies of the Mass, the meaning of the vestments, holy communion, devotion to the Sacred Heart, visitation and adoration of the Sacrament of the Altar. After Benediction a table is placed in front of the altar, near the sanctuary rail, at which the priest is seated to take the offerings of the society. Each member on hearing his or her name called by the priest approaches with the card of membership, drops the monthly fee of ten cents into a basket on the table, and then goes to the lady president, seated at another table outside the sanctuary, who stamps the card. Appoint as president a lady who is modest, pious, and well liked. Fix no special communion day for the members of the Altar Society: they generally all belong to some other church society. But anybody who receives holy communion on the first Friday thereby

Digitized by Google

complies with the rule of any society that prescribes monthly confession. Offer a Low Mass once a month for the living and deceased members of the society. The cards can be kept neat and clean if they are renewed every year. The old ones should be collected and carefully preserved as memorials of the members' generosity to the house of the Lord. Do not allow children to bring the cards of their mothers; insist that every member be present and personally make the offering. On the next page will be found an excellent sample of a card for the Altar Society; it is copied from the *American Ecclesiastical Review* (June, 1896).

8. The Young Ladies' Sodality is easily organized, and managed without difficulty by a prudent spiritual director. Girls who leave Sunday-school at the age of sixteen should be admitted into this sodality. A solemn reception may be held in May or on the Sunday within the octave of the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. You cannot slight this sodality without injuring the future of the parish. By bestowing on it your watchful care, you will raise young womanhood to that degree of Christian nobility and supernatural loveliness for which the Church of Christ has destined the daughter of Eve. Cultivate in their susceptible hearts the special virtues which should adorn the Catholic maiden: purity, modesty, piety, self-sacrifice, and love of retirement. Attend every meeting, and give a brief instruction on some topic peculiarly suited to their conditions. Speak on vocations for a religious life, on the Sacrament of Matrimony, on mixed marriages, on company-keeping. Warn them against the sinful vanities and frivolities of the world, extravagance in dress, round dances and public dancing, reading of dime novels, low theatres. In cities, where many girls living out belong to the Young Ladies' Sodality, the meeting ought to be held every Thursday evening at eight o'clock,

Digitized by Google

The members should wear the ribbon and medal of the sodality. Appoint annually three officers for the sodality: prefect, secretary, and treasurer. The order of exercises is about the same as that for the meeting of the Holy Name Society. Vespers are recited from the sodality-book alternately by the prefect and the members; the hymn is chanted, and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin is said kneeling. Then comes the instruction of the priest, and, if there

(Front—Altar Society.)

No.....

ALTAR SOCIETY

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH,
KALAMAZOO.

Mrs.....
has contributed as follows:

18....

	Dues	Donations
January.....	.....	.....
February.....	....	.....
March.....	.....	.....
April.....	.....	.....
May.....	.....	.....
June.....	.....	.....
July.....	.....	.....
August.....	.....	.....
September.....	.....	.....
October.....	.....	.....
November.....	.....	.....
December.....	.....	.....

(SIGNED)

.....

(Reverse—Altar Society.)

"I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house, the place where Thy glory dwelleth."—Ps. XXV.

DUTIES OF MEMBERS.

1st. Attend the meetings.
2d. Seek to increase the membership.
3d. Receive holy communion once a month.
4th. Pray for the living members of the society.
5th. Pray for dead members.
6th. Attend the Requiem Mass celebrated for deceased members.
7th. Receive holy communion once for each member who dies during the year.

"The fir-tree and the pine-tree together adorn My sanctuary."
—*Scripture.*

"Flowers of many kinds and leaves of trees and branches of vines contribute to the beauty of the church."

"A pious mind devoted to Christ is intent upon small things as well as great, and neglects nothing that pertains even to the meanest office of the Church."—*St. Jerome.*

"The work of the altar should be a labor of love, without money and without price."—*St. Augustine.*

"Everything should be done decently and in order."—*Rubric.*

Digitized by Google

be a considerable number in the sodality, and the bishop has granted permission, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament closes the meeting. A small monthly fee may be collected by the treasurer after the meeting on the third Thursday of the month to defray current or incidental expenses, and to offer the stipend for the monthly Mass. The members should be invited to receive holy communion on the third Sunday of the month. Make all feel that you are deeply concerned in their spiritual progress, and greatly pleased with their edifying conduct. Furnish them wholesome and suitable reading-matter from the parish library.

9. The Rosary and Scapular Society should be made up of the married ladies of the parish, though widows and *old maids* should not be excluded. This society should meet every Sunday afternoon at four o'clock, or rather, after service. The meeting should be short and simple: Rosary, and an instruction, chiefly on the duties of Christian mothers. Twenty minutes should be enough for the entire meeting. It is difficult for one priest to attend to all this after his hard work in the morning and Sunday-school and service in the afternoon and with the prospect of meeting the men at seven o'clock. But Sunday is his harvest, when he sacrifices himself for the welfare of his sheep, forgetting, like a good mother, fatigue and ache in the anxiety for his children. At eight o'clock, when all the work is over, the divine Master will send His weary servant a deal of peace and interior satisfaction that will compensate for all the hardships of the well-spent day.

10. There should be sodalities for the youthful members in a well-regulated parish. The little boys and girls who have not made their First Communion, from the ages of seven to twelve, should be enrolled in the Holy Angels' Sodality or Society of the Infant Jesus. They should meet immediately after their Mass on Sunday

Digitized by Google

and recite together some prayers in honor of the Infant Jesus or the Holy Angels. A small statue or a picture should be placed before them, with flowers and lighted candles, to remind them of the object of their special devotion. Small children like singing; they will be easily taught a pious hymn, which they should sing at the beginning or close of each meeting. A sister or, if such be impossible, a pious and intelligent lady should be placed in charge of the juvenile society. But the priest must "drop in" and say a few pleasant words or tell a story. The Sodality of St. Aloysius will unite the boys who have made their First Communion and attend Sunday-school. Get the little sodality-book and make them recite the office and sing the hymns. Appoint a president, secretary, and treasurer. Have a small fee, five cents a month, for current expenses, and keep the supervision yourself. They may meet on Monday evenings for their short devotional exercises and your instruction. Provide them with medals and a banner, and allow them occasionally to march in procession around the church. On the feast of St. Aloysius or on the Sunday within its octave they should be honored with a special celebration. They receive holy communion on the fourth Sunday of the month. The young girls of corresponding age should form a separate society as The Children of Mary. If there be no time or room for their meetings on Sunday, allow them to assemble on Tuesday or Wednesday evenings. In the main they should follow the rules and exercises as laid down in the *Children of Mary's Manual*, which should be in the hands of every sodalist. A sister will be the proper manager of this sodality, but the priest should show his gentle face at every meeting, and have a few words of advice and instruction for the good girls.*

* Read the article of Father O'Brien in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, June, 1896. It contains a store of practical information given

Digitized by Google

11. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul relieves the poor and provides for spiritual necessities. The Third Baltimore Council recommends this society to the special attention of rectors. *Praeterea, ad pauperum indigentiam modo efficaci simul ac Christiano levandam, maxime curabunt ecclesiarum rectores, ut omni opera foveant societatem illam "de populo inferioris ordinis tam praeclare meritam, quae a Vincentio patre nominatur. Cognitum est quid agat, quid velit, scilicet tota in hoc est, ut egentibus et calamitosis suppetias eat ultro, idque sagacitate modestiaque mirabili; quae quo minus videri vult, eo est ad caritatem Christianam melior, ad miseriarum levamen opportunior"* (No. 258). The object of the society is to sustain its members, by mutual example, in the practice of a Christian life, and to bring temporal and spiritual assistance to the needy. According to the general rules, all Christian young men who desire to unite in a communion of prayers and a participation of the same works of charity may become members wherever they may happen to reside. No work of charity should be regarded as foreign to the society, although its special object is to visit poor families. Thus its members are expected to embrace every opportunity of affording consolation to the sick and to prisoners; of instructing poor, unprotected, or imprisoned children; and of procuring the succors of religion for those who need them at the hour of death. When several members of the society are found in any locality, they meet to encourage each other in the practice of virtue. This meeting is called a *conference*, the name originally given to the society itself. In America a conference is generally attached to a particular parish; hence the name of parish conference. Happy the parish

by a successful pastor and zealous worker, and will aid in the organization of societies. We advocate the *weekly* meeting instead of the *monthly* for all parish societies, except the Altar Society and all the confraternities of the Sacred Heart. In our experience, the *monthly* meeting proved insufficient to keep alive the spirit of activity in the society.

Digitized by Google

and its priest where such a conference exists and is carried on strictly according to the approved rules! Where the priestly interest is lacking, the society does not seem to possess the intended efficiency. The priest, therefore, should be present at every meeting, open it with prayer, and give some words of practical advice on the means of raising funds and the distribution of them in the spirit of the society. The members will become his valiant assistants in every charitable work organized for the needy.

12. Temperance Societies should be encouraged and aided by all who deplore the scandal given and the spiritual ruin wrought by intemperance (cf. Pastoral Letter, l. c.). The noonday devil, the spirit of intemperance, stalks through our fair land, chasing peace and love and enjoyment from home and the family-circle, breaking hearts and blighting hopes and damning souls forever. Men, once faithful to God and His Church, and happy in their homes, have become slaves to the brutal indulgence of their unruly appetites; they have "compared themselves to senseless beasts, and have become like to them" (Ps. xlviii. 13). Heaven's light, divine grace, is extinguished in their souls, and people turn away from them with loathing and disgust. Their children live in filth and rags, and their houses are unlike the dwellings of human beings. The sight of the ravages of this evil fills the priestly soul with dismay. How could the shepherd be indifferent towards the wolf that devours so many sheep? From the Catholic priesthood mainly can come the rescue. *Ab Ecclesiae sacerdotibus, quibus Deus officium dedit homines verbo vitae erudiendi bonisque moribus informandi, auxilium in primis speramus. Nunquam cessent contra ebrietatem ejusque occasiones fortiter conclamare; praesertim vero quum exercitia spiritualia pro populo habent. Memores etiam doctrinae Apostolicae plebem commissam ex animo doceant scriptum esse:* "*neque ebriosi . . . regnum Dei possidebunt*" (1 Cor.

Digitized by Google

iv. 10); *revocent in mentem aliorum qui existimant se stare, verba Eccli.* iii. 27: "*qui amat periculum peribit in illo.*" *Praeterea quum verba moveant tantum, exempla vero trahant, sacerdotes ipsimet qui, monente Apostolo, debent esse forma gregis ex animo, sint temperantiae virtutis exempla* (Conc. Balt. III. 261). The same Council approves and highly recommends our various temperance societies, especially the *Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America* and the *Confraternity of the Sacred Thirst.* Another temperance society has of late years come into prominence which seems destined to become more popular and, consequently, more practical than any other organization for the suppression of the vice of drunkenness: *The American League of the Cross*, first established by the Jesuit Fathers in the Holy Family Church of Chicago, is spreading rapidly throughout the United States. Father Nugent, of England, is the originator of this League. Its spirit is expressed in the words of Cardinal Manning: "Now, my dear friends, listen! I will go to my grave without tasting intoxicating liquors, but I repeat distinctly that any man who should say that the use of wine or any other like thing is sinful when it does not lead to drunkenness, that man is a heretic condemned by the Catholic Church. With that man I will never work. Now, I desire to promote total abstinence in every way that I can; I will encourage all societies of total abstainers. But the moment I see a man not charitable, attempting to trample down those who do not belong to the total abstainers, from that moment I will not work with those men. I would have two kinds of pledges—one for the mortified, who never taste drink, and the other for the temperate, who never abuse it. If I can make these two classes work together, I will work in the midst of them; if I cannot get them to work together, I will work with both of them separately." Elsewhere the same high authority supplements these ex-

Digitized by Google

pressions: "The Catholic Church has always taught the lawfulness of using all things that God has made, in all their manifold combinations, so long as we use them in conformity with the law of God. Drunkenness is not the sin of the drink, but of the drunkard. Nevertheless, in every utterance of the Church and in every page of Holy Scripture wine is surrounded with warnings. The extreme facility of its abuse, its subtle fascination, its overpowering spells, and its stealthy imposition of bondage on the intellect and the will of the lowest to the highest natures are all set forth in the word of God, as by the hand of a man writing upon the wall."

In the League, *pledges* are merely supplementary to the use of prayer and the sacraments. Confession and holy communion are the essential elements in the conversion of the intemperate: they are the oldest and most efficacious remedies against intemperance. Other means advocated by the League are total and partial pledges, occasional meetings, lectures, the good example of the members, and the formation of branches of the League wherever practicable. There are no fees of obligation, as it is believed that the expenses necessarily incurred will be met by the free-will offerings of the members. The conditions of membership, in branches intended for men only, are: To be at least seventeen years of age, and to sign one or other of the following pledges that are in the form of coupons attached to corresponding stubs, which the Director keeps:

I, ...promise to you, Reverend Father, and to the League of the Holy Cross, by the help of God's grace, to abstain from all intoxicating drinks, to discourage their use, and to refrain from entering, without strict necessity, places where such drinks are sold.

Signed in my presence,

.....

Spiritual Director.

Newport, R. I., ...189....No.....

Digitized by Google

A certificate of membership, with pledge of *partial* abstinence, may be written in this way:

I,.....*for the sake of helping to discourage and discountenance intemperate drinking customs, hereby promise to you, Reverend Father, and to the League of the Holy Cross, to abstain, by the help of God's grace, from drinking in places where intoxicating drinks are sold, and from entering such places without strict necessity.*

Signed in my presence,

.....

Spiritual Director.

Newport, R. I.,.....189....No.....

Those who join the second division of the League by taking the pledge of partial abstinence give their word of honor that for a stated period they will neither accept nor offer a *treat* in any place where drinks are sold, and that in token of their promise they will wear the cross of the League.* This pledge does not forbid them to drink at home or at a friend's house; it merely induces them to discard the execrable treating custom, which is the real tempting devil of drunkenness. It is generally the false idea of friendship and sociability that leads men into this vice. The most practical solution, therefore, seems to be this: Keep men away from the saloon as long as you cannot keep the saloon away from men. Never give the pledge to a man in the state of intoxication; advise him to return to you on the following day. Give the pledge on condition that the one who takes it goes soon to confession.

* For further information on the League of the Cross see Father Dowling's paper in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, March, 1895, in which the reverend gentleman cleverly shows the advantages of the League over the other existing Temperance Societies.

Digitized by Google

§ 55.

Book-Keeping.

1. The care for the temporalities of the church is not the least among the various pastoral duties. It requires a conscientious stewardship and business tact to keep the church property in a good financial condition, and to increase the material prosperity of the parish on which depends to a considerable degree the spiritual welfare of its members. The American priest does not comply with the requirements of his position by preaching and administering the sacraments: he must be a successful manager of the church revenues, the sacred offerings of the faithful. He must know how to lay his plans in order to raise special funds for special works, to increase receipts and reduce expenditures, and to do all this so quietly and carefully that the priest will never be obscured by the manager. He must be able to give his master, the bishop, at any time a clear insight into his faithful administration whenever the episcopal order reaches him: *redde rationem.* He must keep his *books* in order. *Ut omnia recte ordinateque procedant, rectores missionum praeter regesta in Rituali Romano praescripta (ubi Libri status animarum expressa mentio fit) habeant librum computus, in quo receptae et expensae, jura et debita, perspicue et accurate suo quaeque ordine describantur. Si rectoris negligentia et gravi culpa error, ex quo ecclesiae damnum emergat, in librum irrepserit, sciat se in conscientia de damno teneri* (Conc. Balt. III. 275).

2. Besides the books of account, there are registers of births, marriages, and deaths to be kept with scrupulous accuracy. Their preservation and safe custody is of the highest importance. Never allow anybody to take them

Digitized by Google

away from the church or your residence, or even to inspect them, except in your presence. The Third Baltimore Council mentions the iron safe as the most secure place for parish records and documents. *Quo melius prospiciatur . . . libris et documentis parochialibus, i.e. regestis, libro computus, inventario, testamento, contractuum syngraphis, aliisque hujusmodi scripturis, monemus, ut unusquisque rector in domo sua, vel alio loco tuto ac convenienti, habeat arcam ferream* (safe) *quae Archivi parochialis vices impleat. In hac igitur arca libri praedicti et omnia instrumenta officialia, sive diocesana sive civilia, tam quae res spirituales quam temporales missionis spectant, sedulo ac tuto custodiantur* (No. 278). Where a safe cannot be had the records should be preserved in a dry place, well closed and locked, and at a distance from the fireplace. All these registers should be of strong and durable paper, written with black ink and in distinct characters, and solidly bound. *Datum vero, et acceptum omne describe* (Ecclus. xlii. 7). Do not delay in making entries immediately. It is dangerous to make records on stray sheets or in note-books with the view of transferring them afterwards to the proper register.

3. Our conditions of church temporalities require a rudimentary knowledge of book-keeping for the priest on the mission. Book-keeping is the art of keeping accounts in such a manner that a person may at any time know the true state of his business. Brevity and perspicuity are necessary qualities in all business transactions. Accuracy in accounts is a cardinal virtue. It is less difficult to fall into errors than to correct them. Books must be kept neat and legible. The principal books are the day-book, ledger, and journal. For personal and house accounts we suggest the use of the day-book, while the journal seems best suited for church accounts. We adjoin an example of *journalizing* church accounts during the space of two

Digitized by Google

months. At the end of six months, or certainly at the close of the year, the various items should be *classified* and summarized, and a financial statement should be drawn up on a separate sheet, similar to the one given in the annual report* on pages 319 and 320.

* We have presumed the kind permission of our Right Reverend Ordinary in publishing the formula used in the diocese of Providence for the annual report. It seems to be a model of completeness and clearness.

Digitized by Google

St. Peter's Church Corporation.

Dr.

1896				
Jan.	2	To Cash on hand	$12.60	
"	5	" Pew-rent	414.20	
"	"	" Seat-money	34.40	
"	"	" Offertory collection	29.16	
"	12	" Pew-rent	126.50	
"	"	" Seat-money	36.10	
"	"	" Offertory collection	23.11	
"	14	" Lecture on the Holy Land, by Rev. Dr. Everywhere	240.65	
"	19	" Pew-rent	97.00	
"	"	" Seat-money	38.40	
"	"	" Offertory collection	21.05	
"	26	" Pew-rent	85.50	
"	"	" Seat-money	40.10	
"	"	" Annual collection for school	175.20	
"	29	" Donation of Mrs. Benevolent	50.00	
"	31	" Cemetery (sale of single graves and lots)	51.00	
				$1474.97
Feb.	1	To Balance	$369.30	
"	2	" Pew-rent	41.40	
"	"	" Seat-money	35.60	
"	"	" Offertory collection	19.21	
"	3	" Offerings for candles	62.45	
"	4	" Altar Society	38.00	
"	9	" Pew-rent	28.50	
"	"	" Seat-money	37.80	
"	"	" Offertory collection	25.12	
"	16	" Pew-rent	16.50	
"	"	" Seat-money	42.10	
"	"	" Offertory collection	26.05	
"	23	" Pew-rent	12.00	
"	"	" Seat-money	43.10	
"	"	" Collection for Indian and Negro Missions	163.50	
"	29	" Cemetery	64.50	
				$1524.78

Digitized by Google

Richville, Ills.

CR.

1896				
Jan.	4	By Brown & Small, on account, for coal	$100.00	
"	9	" Wm. H. O'Neil, carpenter, repairing doors of church	31.25	
"	10	" G. Lenzen (Marion, La.), candles and oil	58.30	
"	18	" Little & Co., three chairs for sanctuary	12.00	
"	15	" Rev. Dr. Everywhere, for lecturing	50.00	
"	21	" Water and gas, for three months to date	63.12	
"	25	" Sexton, wages to date	36.00	
"	27	" Alton Savings Bank, semi-annual interest on mortgage	75.00	
"	31	" Salary of teachers, to date	80.00	
"	"	" Organist, salary to 29th inst.	40.00	
"	"	" Rector, salary	60.00	
"	"	" Balance on hand	869.30	
				$1474.97
Feb.	1	By J. Augustin, plumber, work at residence	$53.60	
"	4	" D. Newman, hymn-books for choir	22.30	
"	29	" Salary of teachers to date	80.00	
"	"	" Organist's salary in full to date	40.00	
"	"	" Sexton, wages to date	50.00	
"	"	" Mrs. Murphy, sweeping church for two months	9.00	
"	"	" Rector's salary	60.00	
"	"	" Balance on hand	1209.88	
				$1524.78

Digitized by Google

DIOCESE OF PROVIDENCE.

Statistical Returns of the Parish of

for the Year ending December 31, 18

1. How many churches in your district; and what is the title of each one?	1. .....
2. What is the number of Catholics in the district under your charge?	2. .....
3. What missions with or without churches are attended, and how often? What is the Catholic population of each mission?	3. .....
4. In how many places in your district are classes for catechism established, and what is the average attendance of boys and girls in each place?	4. .....

Digitized by Google

	ADULTS.	CHILDREN.	TOTAL.
5. How many baptisms in the past year?			
6. How many were confirmed?			
7. How many received First Communion?			

8. How many received Easter Communion? .....

9. How many marriages? .....

10. When was Confirmation administered? .....

11. Has the church separate, well-bound record books, properly kept, for Baptisms? Marriages? Confirmations? Deaths? Status Animarum?

	BOYS?	GIRLS?	TOTAL?
12. How many teachers in Catholic schools for			
How many pupils on register in Catholic schools?			
What is the average attendance of			

13. What religious confraternities or societies are established, and what is the membership of each one?

(*a*) For Males. .....

.....

.....

(*b*) For Females. .....

.....

.....

Digitized by Google

Church of .....

1. Are the churches in your district in the name of the Ordinary or of a corporation?	1. .....
2. Have the deeds been recorded?	2. .....
3. (*a*) Have auditors been selected according to the diocesan statutes?	3. (*a*) .....
(*b*) When were they selected?	(*b*) .....
4. Is there a parochial residence in your district?	4. .....
5. In whose name is the title?	5. .....
6. Has it been recorded?	6. .....
7. Does the house furniture belong to the church?	7. .....

N. B. It is the desire of the Bishop that each parochial residence be moderately but decently furnished at the expense of the church.

8. What movable property belongs to the church, such as	8. Chasubles? Copes? Chalices? Ciboriums? Missals? Organs?
9. Have you sent to the Chancery office an inventory of church property?	9. .....
10. Are confessionals or screens erected in a public place in each church?	10. .....

Digitized by Google

11. Is there a cemetery in your district?

(*a*) In whose name is the title?

(*b*) Has it been blessed?

(*c*) Is there any debt upon it? how much?

(*d*) How has the revenue been expended?

11. .....

(*a*) .....

(*b*) .....

(*c*) .....

(*d*) .....

12. What other real estate is there belonging to the church or devoted to religious purposes under your control?

12. .....

.....

13. What debts are there on church property besides mortgages?

.....

.....

.....

14. Please to state under the different heads the mortgage debt on the ecclesiastical property under your control.

Property mortgaged.	Amount of mortgage.	To Whom mortgaged.	When will mortgage expire.	At what rate of interest.	When payable.
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

Digitized by Google

Church of.....

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

RECEIPTS.			*EXPENDITURE.*		
Amount on hand, Dec. 31st, 18	.....	....	Salary of priests.....	.....	....
Pew-rent, { Ordinary.....	.....	....	Salary of teachers.....	.....	....
Pew-rent, { Seat-money.....	.....	....	Sexton.....	.....	....
Collections for church.....	.....	....	Sanctuary expenses.....	.....	....
Collections for school.....	.....	....	Choir and Organist.....	.....	....
Fairs, Lectures, Festivals, Picnics, etc.....	.....	....	Interest.....	.....	....
Societies.....	.....	....	Cathedraticum.....	.....	....
Donations and bequests.....	.....	....	Fuel.....	.....	....
Miscellaneous sources.....	.....	....	Water and gas.....	.....	....
Borrowed money.....	.....	....	Repairs—Carpenter.....	.....	....
Cemetery.....	.....	....	Mason.....	.....	....
Rents.....	.....	....	Plumbing.....	.....	....
.....	.....	....	Other repairs and labor.....	.....	....
.....	.....	....	Insurance.....	.....	....
.....	.....	....	Taxes.....	.....	....
.....	.....	....	Furniture—church and house.....	.....	....

Digitized by Google

.....			.....	.....	Furniture—School	.....	....
.....			.....	....	Debt paid.....	.....	....
DIOCESAN COLLECTIONS.					.....	.....	....
					.....	.....	....
Amount sent to Chancery Office:					.....	.....	....
Mission	.....	....	.....	....	.....	.....	....
Easter.....	.....	....	.....	....	.....	.....	....
Eccles. Students.....	....	....	.....	....	.....	.....	....
Holy Father.....	.....	....	.....	....	.....	.....	....
Orphans.....	.....	....	.....	....	Cemetery expenses.....	.....	....
					Amount of diocesan collections.....	.....	....
Total.....			.....	....	Balance.....	.....	....
Balance.....			.....	....			
Total.....			.....	....	Total.....	.....	....

We certify that the financial statement given above is correct,

.....*Rector.*

.....
.....
} *Auditors.*

Digitized by Google

SCHEDULE OF INSURANCE.

Property insured.	Amount.	Company.	To whom payable.	Date of expiration.

Digitized by Google

ESTIMATED VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY.

Church and land	.....	....	Schools and land	.....	....
House and land	.....	....	Cemetery	.....	....
Other real estate	.....	....	Cash on hand, December 31, 18	.....	....
	.....	....		.....	....

Signature of Rector,

.....

January 18

Rev. Sir.

Answers to questions found in this report are to be given in detail, and under corresponding numbers.

This report is to be returned to the Bishop by the first of February, 18

In the account-book of the church a duplicate of the financial statement should be inserted.

✝ MATTHEW HARKINS,

Bp. of Providence.

Digitized by Google

NOTANDA.

THERE are other books which may be of great help in a large parish where a considerable amount of money is received and disbursed, especially at the time of building a church or school. We mention the most important ones.

The *Cash Book*, in which is kept an account of all money received and of all money paid out.

The *Bill Book*, in which is kept a memorandum of notes, bills receivable, bills payable, and bills of exchange.

The *Memorandum Book* is used for recording memorandums of various kinds, agreements, and all important particulars relating to a person's business that belong neither to the day book nor ledger.

The *Letter Book* contains copies of all important business letters. A copying-machine saves much labor and secures greater accuracy. Letters copied by machine afford better legal evidence in court.*

For ecclesiastics entirely unacquainted with business transactions we add the following explanations:

A *Note* is a written or printed paper acknowledging a debt and promising payment. Notes are of different kinds.

A *Promissory Note* is a writing which contains a promise to pay money or deliver property to another, at or before a time specified, in consideration of value received by the promisor, or person who signs the note.

A *Negotiable Note* is one that may be transferred from one person to another, or that may be bought and sold, and thus have different owners at different times.

A *Due Bill* is a written promise to pay a certain sum of money, or a specified amount in goods or property, to a person named, to his order, or to the bearer. Due bills

* No rector should ever send out a letter of importance *uncopied*.

Digitized by Google

procuring more comprehensive works of theology. Never buy a book which you do not need. You should make better use of your money than to spend it on the poets, bound in calf and gold, and illustrated with frivolous pictures by modern artists. Although you ought to consult your individual taste and inclination for a particular branch of theology and philosophy, yet the other sections should not be entirely neglected. Never purchase books because they are cheap; cheap books are generally too dear for their real value.

3. Keep your books clean. Do not allow the dust of years to settle on them. They deserve good treatment. Keep them in a book-case with glass doors, or have them covered by curtains. Have them all bound plainly and solidly. See that your library becomes useful after your death. Make your will in time, and dispose of your books as you think best. The parish library may not possess some works that you have; a diocesan seminary or an episcopal library will make good use of the rest. Keep a list or a catalogue of all the books; the following schedule may be useful:

No.	Author	Title of Book	No. of Vol.	Publisher	Date of Publ.	Remarks

Digitized by Google

The selection of books for the priest's library seems to be a hopeless as well as thankless task. It is like ordering clothes for an unknown man whose size we ignore. And yet we are aware of the many and serious blunders made frequently by young ecclesiastics in the purchase of books; we therefore venture to give an incomplete list of the most valuable works for a priest's library, hoping to serve the inexperienced, and to acquaint seminarians with the standard authors of theology and philosophy. We also refer to the series of articles written by competent men on the same subject and published in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, 1895.

Holy Scripture.

Introduction.

Historica et critica introductio in U. T. Libros sacros, by R. Cornely, S.J. Paris.

General Introduction to the Sacred Scriptures in a Series of Dissertations, Critical, Hermeneutical, and Historical, by Rev. Joseph Dixon, D.D. Maynooth.

Manuel Biblique, by Vigouroux and Bacuez. Paris.

Historia sacra Vet. Test. compendiose concinnata, by H. Zschokke. Vienna.

Introduction to the Sacred Scriptures, by Rev. John McDevitt, D.D. Dublin and New York.

Einleitung in die heilige Schrift, by Dr. Franz Kaulen. Freiburg.

Handbuch der Einleitung ins Neue Testament, by Dr. Brandscheid. Freiburg.

La Bible et les Découvertes modernes, by F. Vigouroux. Paris.

Auxiliaries for Biblical Studies.

Historisch-geographischer Bibelatlas, by P. Riess, S.J. Freiburg.

Digitized by Google

Zeitschrift des deutschen Palestina-Vereins. A quarterly.

Description géographique, historique, et archéologique de la Palestine, by GUÉRIN. Paris.

Hebrew Grammar, translated from Dr. KAULEN's work. St. Louis.

Hebrew Lexicon, by GESENIUS, translated by ROBINSON. Boston.

Grammatica graecitatis Novi Testamenti, by T. BEELEN. Louvain.

Lexicon Graeco-Latinum, by C. G. WILKE. Revised by VALENTINUS LOCH. Ratisbon.

Bible Dictionary, by CALMET, translated by HORSTMAN.

Kirchenlexicon, by WETZER and WELTE.

Dictionnaire de la Bible, by F. VIGOUROUX. Paris.

Concordantiarum S. Scripturae Manuale, by P. P. DE RAZE, DE LACHAUD, and FLANDRIN. Paris and London.

Thesaurus Biblicus; or, Handbook of Scripture References, by Rev. LOUIS A. LAMBERT. Waterloo.

The Divine Armory of Holy Scripture, by Rev. KENELM VAUGHAN. Catholic Book Exchange.

Exegesis: Texts and Commentaries.

Hebrew Bible, edited by HAHN and THEILE. Leipzig.

Old Testament in Greek. The three best editions are those of VERCELLONE and COZZA (Rome), LOCH (Regensburg), and Cardinal MAI (Rome).

Latin Vulgate. Biblia Sacra. Tournay: Desclée, Lefevbre et Soc. Other excellent editions of the Latin Bible are those of VERCELLONE (Rome), LOCH (Ratisbon), MARIETTI, and the Lyons edition.

The best Commentaries on the whole Bible are those of CORNELIUS À LAPIDE, TIRINUS, ALLIOLI, LOCH, and REISCHL.

Digitized by Google

The two best *critical* Commentaries of the present day are:

Cursus Scripturae Sacrae. Paris. By the German Jesuit Fathers.

La Sainte Bible. Latin and French. Paris.

Partial Commentaries.

Les Psaumes traduits de l'Hébreu en Latin, by LE HIR. Paris.

Commentarius in Evangelia, by MALDONATO. Mentz.

Commentarius in Joannem, by TOLETO. Rome.

Commentarius in Joannem, by CORLUY. Ghent.

Commentarius in omnes B. Pauli et septem Catholicas Apostolorum epistolas, by ESTIO. Douay and Mentz.

St. Paul's and Catholic Epistles, by Archbishop MACEVILLY.

Triplex expositio Epistolarum S. Pauli, by PICONIO.

The Life of Jesus Christ According to the Gospel History, by Rev. A. J. MAAS, S.J. St. Louis.

DOGMATIC THEOLOGY.

Opera omnia S. THOMAE AQUINATIS. Paris.

Opera omnia S. BONAVENTURAE. Paris.

De locis theologicis libri 12 MELCHIORIS CANI. London.

Opera omnia, F. SUAREZ, S.J. Paris.

De perfectionibus moribusque divinis L. LESSII. Paris.

Summa S. Thomae Hodiernis Academiarum moribus accommodata, by BILLUART. Rome and Paris.

Theologia Wirceburgensis. Würzburg and Paris.

Praelectiones Theologicae, by PERRONE. Naples, Louvain, and Paris.

Theologia Dogmatica, by KENRICK. Philadelphia and Mechlin.

Synopsis theologiae dogmaticae specialis, by A. TANQUERY. Tournay and Baltimore.

Digitized by Google

De divina traditione et Scriptura; de Ecclesia Christi; de Deo uno et trino; de Verbo Incarnato; de Sacramentis in genere; de Eucharistiae Sacramento et Sacrificio, by J.-B. FRANZELIN. Rome.

De Deo creante et elevante, etc., by PALMIERI. Rome.

De Immaculato Deiparae semper Virginis Conceptu, by P. PASSAGLIA. Naples.

De Religione et Ecclesia; de gratia, etc., by C. MAZELLA. Rome and Woodstock.

Theologiae dogmaticae compendium, by H. HURTER. Innsbruck.

Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, by Cardinal NEWMAN.

The Glories of the Sacred Heart. The Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost, by Cardinal MANNING.

The Creator and the Creature. The Blessed Sacrament. By Father FABER.

Dogmatik, by Dr. SCHEEBEN. Freiburg.

De theologia generatim. Commentarius in S. Theologiam ὁδηγος, by CLEMENTE SCHRADER, S.J. Poitiers.

APOLOGETICS.

Disputationes de controversiis fidei, by R. BELLARMINE. Cologne and Paris.

Controversies, by St. FRANCIS DE SALES; translated by Father MACKEY.

Discours sur l'histoire universelle. Histoire des variations des églises protestantes, by BOSSUET.

De Vi ac Ratione Primatus Rom. Pontificum, by P. BALLERINI. Verona and Turin.

De infallibili Romani Pontificis magisterio, by J. WILLEMSEN. Louvain.

The End of Religious Controversy, by J. MILNER.

Symbolism, or the Doctrinal Differences between Catho-

Digitized by Google

lics and Protestants, by J. MOEHLER, translated by J. R. ROBERTSON. London and New York.

Lectures on the Real Presence, by Cardinal WISEMAN. London and Baltimore.

Difficulties of Anglicans. Apologia pro Vita Sua. By Cardinal NEWMAN.

Petri privilegium, by Cardinal MANNING.

Endowments of Man, by Bishop ULLATHORNE. London.

Complete Works of O. BROWNSON. Detroit.

De Ecclesia Christi, by P. MURRAY. Dublin.

Lehrbuch der Fundamentaltheologie or *Apologetik*, by Dr. F. HETTINGER. Freiburg.

Apologie des Christenthums, by Dr. P. SCHANZ. Freiburg.

Apologie des Christenthums vom Standpunkt der Sitte und Kultur, by P. WEISS, O.P. Freiburg.

De Romano Pontifice, by PALMIERI. Rome.

The Faith of our Fathers, by Cardinal GIBBONS. Baltimore.

Notes on Ingersoll. Tactics of Infidels. By Father LAMBERT.

MORAL THEOLOGY.

Secunda Secundae Divi Thomae Aquinatis, in his *Summa Theologica.* This work has not been improved upon since, but it has been often distorted and abused by writers on Moral Theology, who professed to expound *ad mentem Divi Thomae.* Go to St. Thomas directly if you wish to acquire the science of Moral Theology.

De jure et justitia. De fide, Sacramentis in genere, Eucharistia, Poenitentia, Responsa moralia, by J. DE LUGO. After St. Thomas he is the best "Moralist" in the Church.

Theologia Moralis, by LAYMAN.

Medulla of BUSENBAUM.

Digitized by Google

Theologia Moralis. Homo Apostolicus. St. Liguori.

The best modern compendiums are those of Ballerini-Palmieri, Mueller, Prunner, Lehmkuhl, Sabetti, Bouquillon, and last (but not least) the classical work of Father Genicot.

Ascetic Theology.

Ascetic Theology is intimately connected with Moral Theology. It teaches the laws and principles of spiritual life, the knowledge of which is necessary for the confessor and spiritual guide. We mention a few works which are familiar companions of zealous and enlightened priests.

The Imitation of Christ, by Thomas à Kempis.

Introduction to a Devout Life, by St. Francis de Sales.

Spiritual Combat, by Scupoli.

Christian Perfection, by Rodriguez.

De la vie et des vertus chrétiennes, by Mgr. Gay.

Santa Sophia, by Father Baker.

The works of Father Faber, especially his *Growth in Holiness*, *All for Jesus*, and *The Blessed Sacrament.*

Others Masters of the *spiritual life* are:

Cardinal Bona, Schram, Scaramelli, Merotius, and Meschler.

Canon Law.

Sources.

Corpus Juris Canonici, cum vel sine glossa. Rome. The Leipzig edition of A. Friedberg does not give the *Decretum Gratiani* according to the corrected Roman text, but is the arbitrary production of the editor.

Collectanea S. Congreg. de Propaganda Fide. Rome, 1893. This collection is of great importance and practical utility for missionary priests.

Digitized by Google

The Seven Provincial Councils of Baltimore, together with the *Three Plenary Councils of Baltimore*. The decrees of several other Provincial Councils of the United States are found in the third volume of the *Collectio Lacensis*.

Collectanea S. Congreg. Episcoporum et Regularium, by Bizzari. Rome. Very useful for the approbation of new religious congregations and institutions.

Decreta authentica et rescripta authentica S. Congreg. Indulgentiarum. Ratisbon. Pustet & Co.

Nova Collectio S. Congr. Rituum, sub praelo (in qua, eliminatis decretis vel abrogatis vel sibi invicem minus cohaerentibus, hodierna legislatio circa rem liturgicam clare et dilucide tradetur.

Commentaries to the entire Jus Canonicum or parts of it are the works of Prosp. Fagnanus, Pirhing, Schmalzgrueber, Engel, Reiffenstuel, Maschat, Giraldi, Devoti, Benedict XIV. (chiefly his book *De Synodo Diocesana*), Ferraris, Barbosa.—*Modern Authors:* De Angelis, Santi, Wernz, Vering, Lucidi (*De Visitatione Sacrorum Liminum*), Gasparri, De Becker, Craisson, Grandclaude, Messmer, Putzer and Peries.

Periodicals.

Acta Sanctae Sedis. Rome.

Il Monitore Ecclesiastico, published in Italian.

American Ecclesiastical Review. New York.

Archiv für Kirchenrecht, formerly edited by Dr. Vering. Mentz.

La Nouvelle Revue Théologique.

Church History.

Introductio generalis ad historiam ecclesiasticam critice tractandam, by P. Carolo De Smedt, S.J. Ghent and Louvain.

Digitized by Google

Orbis terrarum catholicus, by WERNER, S.J. Freiburg.

Patrologiae cursus completus, seu Bibliotheca omnium SS. Patrum doctorum scriptorumque ecclesiasticorum, sive Latinorum, sive Graecorum, J. P. MIGNE. Paris. It is exceedingly difficult to procure this *immense* work at a low figure, and therefore not within reach of the ordinary priest; but it would be a great treasure for an episcopal or diocesan library.

Annales Cardinalis Baronii. Rome and Antwerp.

Annales Ordinis Benedictini, by J. MABILLON. Paris and Lyons.

History of the Councils, by Bishop HEFELE.

Manuals of Church History, by Cardinal HERGENROETHER, Dr. WOUTERS (Latin), Dr. ALZOG, BERTI (Latin). We are diffident to recommend any other.

Larger works of Ecclesiastical History:

Dissertationes in selecta historiae ecclesiasticae capita, cura H. G. WOUTERS. 4 vols. Louvain. This work possesses more originality and lucidity than the *Dissertationes selectae* of Dr. JUNGMANN, but it unfortunately covers only twelve centuries.

Praelectiones Historicae, by Father PALMA. Unfinished, but solid.

Lives of the Saints, by BUTLER.

Die Reformation, by Dr. DOELLINGER.

The Dark Ages, by MAITLAND.

History of the Popes, by Dr. PASTOR.

History of the Council of Trent, by PALLAVICINI.

Christian Missions, by MARSHALL.

Historical Sketches, by Cardinal NEWMAN.

Biographies of illustrious churchmen give an insight into the tendencies and characteristics of their times.

History of the Catholic Church in the United States, by JOHN G. SHEA. 4 vols. New York.

We warmly recommend three historical works which greatly

Digitized by Google

assist in the study of ecclesiastical history, though they treat of *general* history:

A History of England from the First Invasion of the Romans to the Accession of William and Mary in 1688, by Dr. JOHN LINGARD. London and Boston.

Weltgeschichte, by Dr. J. B. VON WEISS. Graz and Leipzig. 19 vols. thus far. In German. This universal history contains the results of all modern historical researches. It is perhaps the most eminent work of history which Catholic Germany has produced in the nineteenth century.

Narrative and Critical History of America, edited by JUSTIN WINSOR. Boston and New York. A Protestant work, but generally fair and scholarly.

LITURGY.

Missale Romanum.
Breviarium Romanum.
Rituale Romanum.
Pontificale Romanum.
Martyrologium Romanum.
Ceremonial of the Church in the United States.
Sacrae Liturgicae Praxis, by DE HERDT.
Compendium Liturgiae Sacrae, by WAPELHORST.
Manuale Clericorum. Manuale Sacerdotum, by SCHNEIDER.
Notes on the Rubrics, by O'KANE.
Manuale Sacrarum Ceremoniarum, by MARTINUCCI.
Synopsis Canonica Liturgica, by ADONE.
Repertorium Rituum, by HARTMANN.
Liturgical Year, by Dom GUÉRANGER.
Handbuch der Katholischen Liturgik, by Dr. THALHOFER.
The History of the Mass, by O'BRIEN.
Das hl. Messopfer, by Dr. GIHR.

Digitized by Google

Philosophical Works.

Institutiones Philosophicae, by Liberatore.
" " " Tongiorgi.
Summa Philosophica, by Cardinal Zigliara.
Praelectiones Philosophicae Scholasticae, by Van der Aa.
Fundamental Philosophy, by Balmes.
Moral Philosophie, by Father Cathrein.
Other philosophical works of intrinsic value by La Housse, Pesch, Polland, and Hill.
Principles of Anthropology and Biology, by Father Hughes.
Grammar of Assent, by Cardinal Newman.
Die Philosophie der Vorzeit, by P. Kleutgen.
Lehrbuch der Philosophie, by Dr. Stöckl.

Books for Useful Information.

Webster's and Worcester's Dictionaries.
The Century Dictionary.
One of our great Encyclopaedias.
Medicina Pastoralis, by Capellman.
Pastoralmedicin, by Stöhr.
Ruskin's works on Architecture and Painting.
The Popular Cyclopedia of the Arts and Sciences, New York.
Text-Book of Principles of Physics, by A. Daniel.

N.B.—The library of the priest should include the works of standard literature of any language he understands. Dante, Shakespeare, Calderon, should not be missing.

PRINTED BY BENZIGER BROTHERS, NEW YORK.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT LOS ANGELES
THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below
MAY 16 1947
RECD LD-URL
FEB 18 1975
7 1975
LD URL APR 27 '78
OCT 27 '03
Form L-9
10m-3,'39(7752)
UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA
AT
LOS ANGELES
LIBRARY
Digitized by Google

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-LOS ANGELES
L 008 101 329 4

Digitized by Google

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT LOS ANGELES
THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below
MAY 16 1947
RECD LD-URL
FEB 18 1975
7 1975
LD URL APR 27 '76
MAY 01 2001
OCT 27 '03
Form L-9
10m-3,'39(7752)
UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA
AT
LOS ANGELES
LIBRARY
Digitized by Google